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ARABIC PROVERBS

collected

by

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ac

Mrs. A. P. Singer

edited

by

Enno Littmann, Ph. D.
Professor at the University of Strassburg.

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Cairo
F. DIEMER
FINCK & BAYLÆNDER, Succ.
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Preface.

Through the kind offices of Frau O. Hasselbach of Cairo a collection of Arabic Proverbs, made by Mrs. A. P. Singer of Khartum, was handed to me to prepare for publication. Mrs. Singer who has lived in Syria, in Egypt, and in the Sudan, for a considerable length of time, and who has acquired a thorough knowledge of the spoken Arabic, had from time to time written down the Arabic sayings which she had heard used among the people with whom she lived, and Frau Hasselbach suggested to her to put them together, translate, and interpret them. At the suggestion of Frau Hasselbach and of the publisher I undertook this edition, since I had seen that a great deal of valuable material is contained in Mrs. Singer's collection.

Arabic Proverbs have frequently been collected and published, from the days of the old Arabian philologians until the time when modern European travellers and Orientalists began to take an interest in them. And they certainly deserve it. They are a very characteristic part of Arabic speech, they present a realistic an unadulterated picture of the daily life of those nations who speak Arabic; and they are an echo of their thoughts and their feelings, of their wishes and

their fears, and above all, of their practical wisdom. Everybody who knows the near East, knows how fond its inhabitants are of proverbial sayings, how often they use them in ordinary conversation, how many a time a quarrel is stopped or a dispute is settled by the right quotation at the right time, and how those who were angry a moment before, rejoice and smile after they have heard the proverb. This is, of course, well known and needs not to be spoken of here to any length. But I may be allowed here to repeat the advice to anybody intending to have intercourse with Arabic speaking people, to speak with them in their own tongue, and to study their psychology, that he should make himself acquainted with Arabic proverbs: for such purposes the present collection which is altogether based on every day experience will be found, I trust, very useful.

A few words are to be said of my editorial work. Mrs. Singer had written down the proverbs in Latin characters but without most of the diacritical signs which are absolutely necessary for a true rendering of the Arabic. My first task was therefore to read these proverbs with a native, to hear how he pronounced them, and to transliterate them phonetically. The system which I have used will be at once understood by Oriental scholars; those who are not quite familiar with these signs will find some explanatory remarks at the end of this Preface. But since these proverbs were taken down by Mrs. Singer in three different countries,

i. e. Syria, Egypt, and the Sudan, and since there are a great many differences in their dialects, I met with some difficulties. My authority was Maḥmûd Ṣidqī, a native of Cairo, who knows his language perfectly, and who has been of great service to me on other occasions. Wherever the proverb was known in Egypt, — and this is the case with the majority of them —, the matter was easily decided. Several times, however, a proverb known in Egypt was given by Mrs. Singer in its Syrian form, in which case I have generally given the variant readings in my notes. Such proverbs again, as are only known in Syria or in the Sudan, or, to speak more cautiously, of which the Egyptian equivalent has not come to my knowledge, I have given in a form as near to the original as possible: generally I have only added a few dots and accents. Having some familiarity with the Syrian Arabic from my former journeys in that country, I was generally able to judge of those words and forms myself. But since I have never spoken the Arabic dialect of the Sudan, I was obliged to leave open a few questions with regard to the phonetic form and the interpretation of some Sudanese proverbs.

The translations and interpretations given by Mrs. Singer have been changed but very little. Where Mrs. Singer used »you« and »your«, I have written »thou, thee«, and »thy« instead: this is in keeping with many translations from the Arabic and enables us at

the same time to distinguish at once between the singular and the plural, which is sometimes essential. In a very few cases I have corrected Mrs. Singer's translation after a careful study of the original and after comparing it with its parallels from other sources.

The country where Mrs. Singer heard each proverb has been named, with one or two exceptions. I have not altered her indications at all although many of the proverbs which she heard in a specific country are known elsewhere, too. This will be seen from my additional notes. But for the sake of scientific accuracy I deemed it necessary to keep those very valuable remarks as they were.

From a study of my notes the reader will observe that the majority of Mrs. Singer's proverbs are known from other sources. This is not to be wondered at considering the fact that so many collections have already been made. On the contrary, it is rather astonishing that after having compared about ten thousand Arabic proverbs, I found that there really are quite a number of new ones in the present collection, some of which are interesting and important. Even those which are known from other sources have their value as independent witnesses, since they show us which of the many that have been published, are found to be in actual use, and, what is of more importance, give many variant readings which often are more original than the published ones. For a comparative study of Arabic proverbs they are, therefore, indispensable. May

the time not be far off in which a complete *corpus* of Arabic proverbs systematically arranged will be published! Then Oriental philology may proceed to write a real history of the Oriental proverb and make it available for the history of Eastern civilization and for the study of Eastern psychology. A beginning of these studies has been made by Dr. O. Rescher; cf. *Beiträge zur Kenntnis des Orients*, IX, 1911, pp. 35, sqq.

Some of the books which I consulted, give the proverbs only in Arabic characters; others give them in Arabic and Latin, others only in Latin characters; some give translations into German, others into English, others into French; and some give no translation at all. A list of those books will be found at the end of this Preface. I have, in my notes, wherever I thought a variant form interesting or important enough, given an English translation; otherwise I have only given references to passages where such parallels are to be found. Again, in order to show the spread of each proverb, I have added in almost every case the name of the country in which each parallel was found. Only occasionally in references to Ben Cheneb and to Burckhardt, I have omitted to indicate the origin, as all of Ben Cheneb's proverbs came from the Maghrib, i. e. North-West Africa, all of Burckhardt's from Egypt. Burckhardt's and Jewett's collections contain English translations; those I have quoted literally, except in a very few cases, where I thought another translation

would bring out the meaning more clearly. The Orientalist will, of course, wish to compare the original: he will be able to do so, since references are always given. Among the works quoted in my notes, those by Burckhardt, Shuqair, and Ben Cheneb, are the most important and comprehensive. It seems that some of Shuqair's proverbs came from Burckhardt's collection, and that Green's collection has very little independent value of its own, since almost all of it was taken from Burckhardt or Spitta. The most complete references will always be found in Ben Cheneb's standard-work, the best interpretations with much other very important information will be found in Burckhardt's and Snouck Hurgronje's publications; also Jewett, Landberg, and Tallqvist, have contributed much to a better and deeper understanding of the material which they published. It has not been my aim to consult absolutely every single book on Arabic proverbs, nor to follow up the history of each proverb from Classical literature until modern times. For such a task I had no time at my disposal, and it must be left to future investigation to accomplish this work.

I submit Mrs. Singer's collection to Orientalists and to all those who have an interest in Eastern life and thought, with sincere thanks to Mrs. Singer, Frau Hasselbach, and Herr Finck, and with the hope that the work devoted to its publication may not have been done fruitlessly.

Strassburg i. E., October 1912.

Enno Littmann.

List of Abbreviations.

Bauer: *Volksleben im Lande der Bibel von LEONHARD BAUER*, Leipzig, 1903, pp. 225—240.

Ben Cheneb: *Proverbes Arabes de l'Algérie et du Maghreb, recueillis, traduits et commentés par MOHAMMED BEN CHENEB*, Paris, 1905—1907.

Berggren: *Guide Français-Arabe Vulgaire . . . . par J. BERGGREN*, Upsal, 1844.

Burckhardt: *Arabic Proverbs, or the Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians, illustrated from their proverbial sayings current at Cairo; translated and explained by the late JOHN LEWIS BURCKHARDT*, Second Edition, London, 1875.

Einsler: *Arabische Sprichwörter. Gesammelt, übersetzt und erläutert von LYDIA EINSLER in Jerusalem.* Published in the *Zeitschrift des Deutschen Palästina-Vereins*, Band XIX, Leipzig, 1896, pp. 65—101.

Green: *A Collection of Modern Arabic Stories, Ballads, Poems and Proverbs, compiled by A. O. GREEN.* London, 1893, pp. 169—175.

Huxley: *Syrian Songs, Proverbs, and Stories, by H. M. HUXLEY*, in *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, Vol. XXIII, pp. 175 sqq.

Jewett: *Arabic Proverbs and Proverbial Phrases by JAMES RICHARD JEWETT, from Vol. XV of the Journal of the American Oriental Society* New Haven, 1891.

Landberg: *Proverbes et Dictons de la Province de Syrie, Section de Saydâ par CARLO LANDBERG*, Leide, Paris, 1883.

Maḥmûd: Proverbs taken down by myself at Cairo from Maḥmûd Ṣidqī.

Meissner: *Neuarabische Sprichwörter und Rätsel aus dem Iraq. Von BRUNO MEISSNER.* Published in the *Mittheilungen des Seminars für Orientalische Sprachen zu Berlin*, Jahrgang IV, Abteilung II, Berlin 1901, pp. 137—174.

Mustaṭraf: *Kitâb el-Mustaṭraf by AḤMED EL-ABSHIHĪ*, printed at Cairo, in the year 1315 of the Hegirah.

Shuqair: *Amthāl el-ʿawām(m) fī Miṣr was-Sūdān wash-Shām . . . limuʾallifihi Naʿūm Shuqair*, printed at Cairo, 1894.

Snouck Hurgronje: *Mekkanische Sprichwörter und Redensarten gesammelt und erläutert von Dr. C. SNOUCK HURGRONJE*, Haag, 1886.

Socin: *Arabische Sprichwörter und Redensarten gesammelt und erläutert von DR. ALBERT SOCIN*, Tübingen, 1878 and

Der arabische Dialekt von Mōṣul und Mārdīn. Von A. SOCIN. In *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft*, Band 37, Leipzig 1883, pp. 188 sqq.

Spitta: *Grammatik des arabischen Vulgärdialekts von Aegypten, von DR. WILHELM SPITTA-BEY,* Leipzig 1880, pp. 494—516.

Tallqvist: *Arabische Sprichwörter und Spiele, gesammelt und erläutert von KNUT L. TALLQVIST,* Leipzig, 1897.

Yahuda I: *Baydadische Sprichwörter. Von A. S. YAHUDA,* in *Orientalische Studien, Theodor Nöldeke zum siebzigsten Geburtstag gewidmet,* Giessen, 1906, I, pp. 399—416.

Yahuda II: *Yemenische Sprichwörter aus Sanaa. Von A. S. YAHUDA.* In *Zeitschrift für Assyriologie,* Band XXVI, Strassburg, 1911, pp. 345—358.

System of Transliteration.

The vowels *a e i o u* are short open vowels; *e* and *o* at the and of Syrian Arabic words are short and closed.

The vowels *ā ē ī ō ū* are originally long closed vowels without the accent, but they are often shortened.

The vowels *â ê î ô û* are long closed vowels bearing the accent.

As to the pronunciation of Arabic consonants the following may be said in short here: *ḍ* is an emphatic *d*; *g* is in words from Egypt the hard English *g*, in words from Syria it equals English *j* and sometimes French *j*; *gh* is the German uvular *r*; *ḥ* is a deep harsh guttural *h*;

kh equals the German *ch* after *a* and *o*; *q* is pronounced as a hiatus in words from Syrian and Egyptian towns, in the Sudan it is a hard *g*, in classical and literary Arabic it is an emphatic *k*; *s* is always hard (voiceless) as in the beginning of English words; *ṣ* is an emphatic *s*; *sh* equals English *sh*; *z* equals English *z*; *ẓ* is an emphatic *z*; ' is a voiced guttural, the Semitic *'ain*, which has no parallel in European languages.

The proverbs, the translations, and interpretations, given by Mrs. Singer are always printed first, the notes of the editor follow enclosed in signs of quotation.

1.

rûḥ ḥilu taʿâla ḥilu, ʾin ḥabîbak ʿasal lā tilḥasu kullu.

Go sweetly, come sweetly: if thy friend be honey do not lick him all up. — Syrian.

A woman had an only daughter, and when she got married, her mother went every morning to see how the newly married pair got on. Invariably she spent the whole day with them. The son-in-law did not quite relish this sign of affection; so one day he told his wife not to prepare anything for supper, since he had provided for everything. In the evening, when he came home, he placed a dish of honey on the table and invited his wife and her mother to sit down. They ate until only a very little of the honey remained; then the man removed the dish and said: »Go sweetly and come sweetly; if thy friend be honey, do not lick him all up.«

»The second part of this proverb, viz. »if thy friend be honey, do not lick him all up«, is known in almost all Arabic speaking countries. Spitta (No. 3), Green (No. 78), and Maḥmûd, have it from Cairo, with the variants *ṣaḥbak* for *ḥabîbak* and *mā tilḥasûsh* for *lā tilḥasu*. Shuqair (p. 16, No. 192) reports it from Syria and from the Sudan. Also the Mustaṭraf (p. 29) knows it. Einsler (No. 1) and Bauer (No. 6) have taken it down at Jerusalem, Ben Cheneb in Algiers;

further references are given by Ben Cheneb under Nr. 86. — The characteristic story told by Mrs. Singer does, of course, not refer to the origin of this proverb, but it shows how well theoretical sayings are sometimes practically applied.«

2.

ish-shahr illī mā fih lak shahrîyat lā t'idd ʾyâmu.

The month in which thou hast no wages — do not count its days. — Arab universal.

»This proverb is indeed universal. The meaning is, of course, that one ought not to count a day in which he does not gain something. — Burckhardt and Maḥmûd know this saying from Egypt; Shuqair from Syria, Egypt and the Sudan; Einsler from Jerusalem; Socin from Mesopotamia; Yahuda from the Yemen; Ben Cheneb from the Maghrib. The forms in which it is quoted are the following. Burckhardt (No. 349), Shuqair (p. 88, No. 32): »A month which does not belong to thee — do not count its days«; Burckhardt (No. 754), Shuqair (p. 116, No. 91): "A day which does not belong to thee — do not count it as a part of thy life.« Maḥmûd: »The day in which thou gainest nothing, is not a part of thy life.« Shuqair (p. 28, No. 96): »A month from which no salary comes to thee — do not count its days.« Einsler (No. 76): »The month in which thou hast no means of living — do not count its days.« Socin (No. 410): »A month in which thou hast no account — do not count it.« Yahuda (II, No. 28):

»A month in which thou doest not buy nor sell — do not count its days.« Ben Chenob (No. 1036): »The month whose wages do not reach thee — do not count it.« Further references are to be found at the passage last quoted.«

3.

baḥubbak yā ṣwâṛī, zai zindī la'.

I love thee, oh my bracelet, but not like my wrist. — Syrian.

»The Mustaṭraf (p. 32, l. 11 from below) calls this one a proverb of the women; but the form in which it is given there, viz. 'I love thee, oh my bracelet, like my wrist', seems to be wrong. On the other hand, Shuqair (p. 17, No. 7), Huxley (No. 73) both from Syria, Landberg (p. 101), who heard it in Syria and in Egypt, and Socin (No. 51), who had it from Damascus, present the same version as Mrs. Singer, and that the idea expressed by the latter is the correct one, is proven by parallels from other languages. However, the Mustaṭraf is right in calling it a woman's saying, on account of the allusion to the bracelet. Therefore, in Socin's version the first word, *'āl*, i. e. »he said«, should be cancelled or changed to *'ālet*, i. e. »she said«. The home of this proverb seems to be Syria, and, accordingly, the original must have had *mitl* instead of *zai*.

A slightly different version is given by Huxley, No. 91 (also from Syria): »I love thee my bracelet, but not on another's arm.«

4.

'illī byâkul min sufrit is-sulṭân byiḍrab bisêfu.

He that eats at the sultan's table strikes with his sword. — Syrian.

»Shuqair (p. 13, No. 113) quotes from Syria, Egypt and the Sudan: »He that eats the sultan's bread, strikes with his sword«. And Maḥmûd told me the Cairine saying: »He that is in service with the infidel, strikes with his sword.«

5.

'in gâk naḥs imsiku bi'îdak weriglak, lā yigīk 'anḥas we'anḥas.

If thou hast an unlucky man, keep to him with thy hands and feet, lest a more unlucky one come to thee. — Syrian.

»Burckhardt (No. 5) and Shuqair (p. 69, No. 288) give the same as an Egyptian proverb with a slight variant: »If a worthless fellow be with thee, do not let him go, or else one worse will come to thee.« Ben Cheneb (No. 1016) gives *shidd mashûmak lā yidjîk mā 'ashwam,* and interprets »keep to thy bad, unlucky one (e. g. a friend) lest thou meetest another one that is worse.« I should prefer to take *naḥs* and *mashûm* in its original, more general meaning, i. e. »an unlucky thing, a misfortune«. The idea of this proverb would be, then, that since every misfortune is followed by another, one ought to keep to the present misfortune fearing that a worse one might come. The same idea

is expressed by the following quotations. Shuqair (p. 109, No. 11): »No misfortune without a misfortune worse than itself«; Burckhardt (No. 493): »Upon every misfortune another misfortune«; Ben Cheneb (No. 1771): »One misfortune makes to inherit another«; Tallqvist (No. 171): »Misfortunes draw one another« (read *ilmṣâyib bitdjirr baʿḍha*, with *ḍ*.) Ben Cheneb refers also to Fischer, Machuel, and to a French and a Latin parallel. Among others many German parallels might be cited here.«

6.

il-ʿên mā tiʿla ʿan il-ḥâgib.

The eye does not rise higher than the eye-brow. — Universal.

When a person wishes to put himself lower than his friend the latter uses this proverb.

»Literally the same is found in Syria and Egypt, according to Shuqair (p. 33, No. 68), at Jerusalem, according to Einsler (No. 150), and in the Maghrib, according to Ben Cheneb (No. 2689).«

7.

il-qird fī ʿēn ummu ghazâla.

The imp is a gazelle in his mother's sight. — Syrian.

»A more literal translation would be: »The monkey is a gazelle in the eye of his mother«. This proverb is not only known in Syria, but wherever Arabic is spoken. The above version is found also in the follow-

ing instances: Shuqair, p. 37, No. 38 (from Syria), p. 99, No. 77 (from Egypt); Spitta, No. 52, and Green, No. 95 (from Egypt); Bauer, No. 90 (from Jerusalem); Ben Cheneb, No. 1485 (from the Maghrib, with other references). With this may be compared Burckhardt, No. 60 (= Green, No. 7): »The beetle is a beauty in the eyes of its mother«; Spitta, No. 51: »The beetle is a bride (i. e. young and beautiful, or »a perfumer,« i. e. fragrant) in the arms of its mother.«

8.

il-ḥubb wil-ḥabal wiṭlâʿ il-gübül mā bitkhabba.

Love and pregnancy and going up a mountain cannot be hid. — Syrian.

»Only Einsler (No. 14) has a parallel, which differs slightly: »Love and pregnancy and riding on a camel are not hidden«. — This proverb is used of conspicuous things and actions that everybody needs must notice.«

9.

ʿên ish-shäms mā btitkhabba bil-yad.

The eye of the sun cannot be hid with the hand. — Universal.

»Parallels are known from Mesopotamia, Syria, Egypt, and the Maghrib. Burckhardt, No. 439 (from Egypt) and Shuqair, p. 33, No. 71 (from Syria and Egypt) have the same version as given above. Socin's

version is not quite clear; but it is to be translated »sieves do not cover the eye of the sun«. Ben Cheneb's No. 1026: »The sunbeam cannot be hid and the light of justice cannot be extinguished« is more complete and contains in itself an interpretation. Under No. 1267 Ben Cheneb gives »A sieve does not cover the eye of the sun«. — The meaning is somewhat similar to that of the foregoing proverb.«

10.

duqqe 'ala ṭâsa tigîk 'alfe laḥḥâsa.

Strike thy platter; thou wilt receive a hundred lickers. — Syrian.

»I have not found this proverb anywhere else. It seems that beating the platter serves somewhere to announce that dinner is ready. And the meaning of the proverb would be that there will always be plenty of parasites where a meal is to be had.«

11.

kibîr il-baṣal widdauwar wenîsi ḥâlu l-'auwal.

The onion grew and became round and forgot its former state. — Universal.

»Bauer (No. 98) gives the same, with only the variant *zamâno* »its time« for *ḥâlu*; and he adds that it is used of a man who, after having become prominent, does not wish to remember the days in which nobody

knew him. In the Maghrib people say of such a man, according to Ben Cheneb (No. 1421): »The gourd grew and lengthened its neck.«

12.

mish 'alêkī yā baṭnī, 'alêk yā qadrī.

Not what I am given to eat; but the honour done me. — Syrian.

It is not what is set before me in inviting me; but the honour you do me.

»If this explanation be correct, the use of the preposition *'ala* »against« would seem somewhat strange to me. Perhaps one might also refer this proverb to a modest man who hesitates to eat much at a dinner-party and who would say: »It is not against thee, my stomach, [that I do not each much]; but it is against thee, my honour, [to eat more]«.

13.

kûlbe khallif garu, ṭilʿ angas min 'abûh.

A dog had a young one which grew worse than his father. — Syrian.

»According to Maḥmûd the same proverb is used in Cairo. Socin (No. 94) gives a proverb from Mesopotamia which he translates: »He died as a dog and freed us of his service, but he left a whelp behind that was worse than his father.« I would prefer to translate: „A dog died and freed us of his nuisance,

but . . . etc.« A similar idea is found in the proverb: »The serpent brings forth nothing but a little serpent«; this is given by Burckhardt (No. 599), Shuqair (p. 79, No. 5), both from Egypt, and by Socin (No. 134), from Mesopotamia; Socin refers also to instances in classical Arabic literature.«

14.

'allâh mā shāfùh, 'irfùh bil-'aql.

Good has not been seen, but understood with the mind. — Universal.

»According to Maḥmûd this proverb is also known in Cairo. Shuqair (p. 82, No. 13) gives from Egypt: »We have not seen God, but recognized him with the mind.«

15.

id-dùda gûwa l-ḥagar tâkul khuḍâr.

Even the worm inside a stone eats herbs. — Universal.

»This curious notion of God's omnipotence is expressed in several similar proverbs. Ben Cheneb (No. 2471) has from Algiers: »God provides for the worm in the stone.« The same is given from Egypt by Maḥmûd and by Shuqair (p. 82, No. 11). From the Sudan Shuqair quotes: »God provides for the worm between two stones« (p. 124, No. 4), and from Syria: »God creates a worm in a rock and creates its food with it.« In a popular story of Khaḍra ash-Sharîfa,

printed in Cairo by Muḥammed Ḥusain aṭ-Ṭarazî, the first verse reads in translation

»Praise be to God the Merciful, who provides for men
and the demons' flock,
Also for the birds, and all the fish, and for the worm
inside of the rock.«

16.

gurr il-bint min kummâha, betiṭla' lummâha.

Pull a girl by her sleeve, she always resembles her mother. — Universal.

»Bauer (No. 125) gives the same version from Jerusalem, with the variant »she always returns to her mother«. He offers three interpretations for it: »This saying indicates great love for the mother; or: everything returns to its origin; or: Try to get away a girl from the kind of her mother, she will always be like her; for kind keeps to kind.« The last of these three interpretations is the most probable one. This is suggested also by another version: »Turn the jar on its mouth: the daughter will always resemble her mother«; cf. Landberg, p. 104 (from Syria); Shuqair, p. 30, No. 3 (from Syria), p. 63, No. 120 (from Egypt); Tallqvist, No. 95 (from Syria); Socin No. 577 (from Mesopotamia). Socin's version is not quite complete, and his interpretation is wrong. Some other references are found in Tallqvist's book.«

17.

dûd il-gibna minnu fîh.

The maggot is from the cheese itself. — Syrian.

»Before the last word a *we-* or *u* is to be inserted, and the whole is to be translated: »The maggots of the cheese are of it and in it.« This version is given by Shuqair, p. 24, Nr. 32 (from Syria) and p. 82, No. 32 (from Egypt, with the variant *mäshsh* »whey«, for *gibna)*; and by Green No. 34 (from Egypt). Einsler (No. 199) omits the *we* in the transliterated text, but gives it in the Arabic. Maḥmûd knew this proverb from Cairo. On the other hand, Burckhardt (No. 269) has the form: »The worms of the vinegar are of the vinegar itself«, and Ben Cheneb (No. 804): »The worm is of the wood.« Burckhardt adds, that »this is said when something disagreeable happens in a family caused by one of its ill-natured members«.

18.

'illī bilâ'ib il-quṭṭa yistanna 'ala kharamishha.

He that plays with a cat must expect to be scratched. — Universal.

»This proverb seems to be a very favorite one. The following versions may be given here. Maḥmûd (from Cairo): »He who plays with the cat does not escape its scratches.« Shuqair, p. 68, No. 247 (from Egypt): »Seize the cat, he will scratch thee«; p. 13, No. 110 (from Syria and from the Sudan): »He who

wishes to play with the cat, must stand his scratches.« Ben Cheneb, No. 370 (from the Maghrib), Einsler, No. 147, Bauer, No. 111 (from Jerusalem), and Tallqvist, No. 21 (from the Lebanon) give almost invariably the same reading as above. The literal translation would be: »He who plays with the cat must wait for his scratches.« Spitta, No. 101 (from Egypt) reads: »Talk with the cat, he will scratch thee!«

19.

illī byista'mil il-bakhûr byiḥtiriq diyâlu.

He that uses incense must expect to burn his skirts. — Syrian.

»The proverb is not known to me in this form from other sources. But there are some sayings which express a somewhat similar thought. Ben Cheneb, No. 2198 (from the Maghrib), and Meissner, No. 18 (from Babylonia), read: »He who is not used to incense, burns his clothes.« And Spitta, No. 4 (= Green, No. 79) as well as the Mustaṭraf, p. 30, l. 1 from below, give: »He who associates with the blacksmith is burnt by his fire.«

20.

zara'te lau fī wâdī kân ṭili' yā rêt.

I sowed an »if« in the valley of »it has been«, and there grew up an »I would it were!« — Syrian.

»This proverb, which is the gem of the whole collection, is not found anywhere else in its complete

form. Parts of it are the two following sayings Jewett, No. 219 (from Syria): »We sowed the word *if*, and it did not spring up«; and Shuqair, No. 40 (from Syria): »They sowed the word *to-morrow*, and it did not spring up.«

21.

yā dâkhil bên il-baṣal wit-tôm yā ṭâliʿ biriḥa shanʿa.

He that goes between onions and garlick comes out with a disagreeable smell. — Universal.

»The usual form of this wide-spread proverb is »He that enters between the onion and its peel, finds only (or »does not go forth without«) its strong smell.« This was known to Maḥmûd; Burckhardt (No. 93), Shuqair (p. 113, No. 10), Spitta (No. 151) and Green (No. 128) have it from Egypt; Ben Cheneb (No. 1988) has it from the Maghrib and refers to other parallels. Einsler gives two versions, viz. No. 67: »Thou who enterest between the onion and the garlick, thou enterest into a disagreeable smell;« and No. 66: Thou who art lost between the onion and its core, thou art lost in a bad smell; the one finds nothing but shame, and the two sisters are reconciled.« The second part seems to be a »gloss which has become a part of the text«. It says that entering between the onion and its core means intervening between two quarrelling women, and that the bad smell is a metaphor for being disliked.«

22.

ʿinde sìdī ʿurs ʾalḥas ʾîdī.

My master has a feast, and I will lick my hand. — Universal.

»At a great feast the guests lick their hands after much good eating. To this the proverb refers.«

23.

ʾibn il-ʾaṣîl mā byitkhabba.

A man of good birth cannot be hid. — Universal.

»Proverbs with a similar meaning are frequent, cf. below Nos. 30 and 31. Maḥmûd quoted from Cairo: *ibn il-ʾaṣl ẓâhir mā yitkhabâsh:* »A man of good birth is known, not hidden.«

24.

il-ʾîd illī mā bitiqdar tuʿuḍḍâha bus-ha weḥuṭṭâha ʿala râsak widʿī ʿalêha bil-käsr.

The hand which thou canst not bite, kiss, put it on thy head and curse it with breaking. — Syrian.

»This complete version is also given by Einsler, No. 49 (from Jerusalem). Other versions omit parts of it: e. g. Landberg, p. 25, and Shuqair, p. 17, No. 219 (from Syria): »The hand which thou canst not bite, kiss, and pray for its breaking!«; Socin, No. 140 (from Mesopotamia) and Ben Cheneb, No. 2018 (from the Maghrib): »The hand which thou canst not bite, kiss, and put it on thy head!« The literature quoted by Socin, Landberg and Ben Cheneb may also be compared.«

25.

il-qanbara mā bitkùn ghêr ʿala l-ḥamìr il-medabbara.

Only donkeys that have sore backs walk haughtily. — Syrian.

A man who is and has nothing and wishes to be thought much of, is like a donkey that has a proud footstep on account of his sore back.

»This very characteristic proverb has a parallel only in Bauer's No. 117 (from Jerusalem): »Thou findest boasting only with sore donkeys.« The word *qambara* means according to Spiro's Dictionary »placing at a height«. The same thought is found in Prov. 13,7: »There is that maketh himself rich, yet has nothing.«

26.

kulle mânu byilbis min ṣandùqu.

Every man dresses from his own box. – Universal.

»According to Maḥmûd this proverb is known in Cairo. — The idiom *ḳulle mânu*, as I have heard it, means »whosoever«. Mr. Willmore in his Grammar, p. 112, § 127, gives *kulle manhu*; this form shows more plainly whence it is derived, viz. from *kullu man huwa.*«

27.

ʾillī fi ṣ-sandûq ʿala ḍahr il-marzùq.

What is inside the box, is on a poor man's back. — Syrian.

»Landberg, p. 152, gives the same proverb from Syria and from Egypt. His versions are: 1) from Sayda:

»What is in the box is spread on the body«; 2) from Jerusalem: »What is in the box is attached to the body;« 3) from Egypt: »What is in the box is over the veins.« (?) Landberg's authority interpreted this proverb in the following way: »It is said by a man who has only one garment, and who, after not having changed it for a long time, is told by a friend to put on another garment, as the latter thinks that he owns another.«

28.

bôs il-īdên ḍiḥik ʿal-liḥa.

[Too much] hand kissing is laughing at the beard. — Syrian.

Too much humility and flattery is only a mockery.

»Shuqair (p. 18, No. 44), Bauer (No. 42), and Landberg (p. 189) quote this proverb from Syria with the variant *ʾayâdī* for *ʾīdên*. Maḥmûd knew it from Cairo in the form *bôs il-ʾīdên diḥke ʿad-duqûn*. Landberg (p. 131) gives the Egyptian equivalent as *bôs el-ʾayâdī ḍuḥk ʿala duqûn*. His authority dictated to him the following interpretation: »If there is somebody like thyself, Sir, and a peasant, like myself, comes and kisses the hand of the gentleman that he may give him some money, and he makes him laugh and flatters him and says to him: »There is nobody like thyself in the world,« and he gets the money, then he goes away laughing at the gentleman«.

29.

kulle mânu yiṣḥab in-nâr liqurṣu.

Every man draws the fire to his own cake. — Universal.

»Einsler (No. 146) and Bauer (No. 113) give the same meaning in somewhat different words, *kull wāḥad bidjurr ennār laqurṣo* (from Jerusalem). Socin (No. 129) quotes from Mesopotamia: »Every one wishes the fire for his own cake«. And Landberg (p. 303), as well as Socin refer to the classical Arabic proverb which is to be translated exactly as the one under discussion. Its meaning is, of course, that every one looks out for his own advantage.«

30.

khud il-'aṣîl lau 'al-ḥaṣîr.

Take a man of good birth (origin), if even he is on a mat. — Syrian.

»Maḥmûd knew from Cairo: »Take the girl of good birth even if she be poor,« and Shuqair quotes from Syria and from Egypt (p. 22; No. 7): »Take the girl of good birth, even if she be on a mat.« This latter version, which is also given by Jewett (No. 168), seems to me the best one. But there are a number of variants which express the thought not so exactly. Socin, No. 117 (from Damascus) gives the same form as Mrs. Singer. But Ben Cheneb, No. 713 (from the Maghrib) has: »Take the woman of good birth and sleep on a

mat,« and Meissner, No. 8 (from Babylonia) reads: »Take the man of good birth and sleep on a mat.« Other references are given by Ben Cheneb.«

31.

il-'aṣîl mā bi'îbu gulâlu.

A horse of good breed is not hid by his saddle. — Syrian.

»Instead of »is not hid« we should translate literally »is not dishonoured«. Shuqair (p. 34, No. 7) quotes this proverb from Syria, but refers it to a »mare of good breed«. A somewhat similar idea is expressed in several other sayings. Yahuda, II, No. 11 (from the Yemen) reads: »The noble one is recognized even in a poor garment.« Jewett, No. 154 (from Syria) expresses it shortly: *il-'aṣl il-'aṣl* »the main thing is the pedigree.« With this we may also compare Burckhardt's No. 117: »An honourable man is honourable, even though mishaps should befall him«. The same is given by Ben Cheneb, No. 637, from Algiers; and his No. 636 reads: »The noble one is noble, and manual labour does not disgrace him.«

32.

bêt is-sab' mā yikhla 'iḍâm.

The lion's den is never empty of bones. — Universal.

You can always find enough to eat in a man's house as you can find bones in a lion's den. This is used when you wish to compliment a person on his plenty.

»In a version which Maḥmûd gave me from Cairo, the metaphor explained by Mrs. Singer is indicated more plainly, viz. *gêb is-sab' mā yikhlâsh* »the pouch of the lion is never empty.« But Mrs. Singer's version is the original one. It is published in almost exactly the same words in the following passages: Shuqair, p. 19, No. 49 (from Syria): Einsler, No. 131, and Bauer, No. 129 (from Jerusalem); Tallqvist, No. 36, and Jewett, No. 94 (from Northern Syria); Ben Cheneb, No. 2292 (from the Maghrib). And Shuqair has, on p. 122, l. 6, from the Sudan the version: »The cavern (i. e. den) of the hyena is never empty of bones.«

33.

il-qalîla wala l-qilla.

Little better than none. — Universal.

»Maḥmûd quoted as a parallel from Cairo *ish-shē 'aḥsan min qillîtu* »the something is better than its want.« But in other collections this proverb has not been found.«

34.

il-kuḥle wala l-'áma.

Kuḥl better than blindness. — Universal.

»The word *kuḥl* is here not to be taken in the meaning »collyrium«; it means here, as often in later Arabic, »remedy for eye-diseases«. And the proverb means »having a sore eye is better than being blind«, or »use a remedy for your sore eye before you grow

blind altogether«. Shuqair gives the same proverb from Syria, p. 38, No. 14; from Egypt and the Sudan he quotes »a weak sight better than blindness«, p. 90, No. 9. Ben Cheneb (No. 2131), Spitta (No. 88) and Tallqvist (No. 134) give this proverb in a similar wording. But the other side of the thought is known also, and a proverb saying, »he went to treat her eye with *kuḥl*, and he made her blind« is given by Shuqair, p. 122, l. 3 (from the Sudan), by Socin, No. 123 (from Mesopotamia), Spitta, No. 80, and Green, No. 136 (from Egypt).«

35.

il-'a'ma 'âyiz êh? quffit 'iyûn? la', wâḥid yikfī.

What does the blind man want? A basket of eyes? No, one is enough. — Syrian.

»Mrs. Singer heard this proverb in Syria, but the form in which it is given above, is Egyptian. That it is known in Syria as well as in Egypt and West-Africa, may be seen from the following quotations. Shuqair, p. 11, No. 74 (from Syria): »What does the blind man want? A pair of eyes, that he may open them«. Spitta, No. 163 (from Egypt): »What doest thou want oh blind man? — A basket of eyes!« Burckhardt, No. 512 (Egypt): »It was asked: 'What is the wish of the blind?' 'A basket full of horns', they replied, 'if he does not see, he may like butting.'« Socin, No. 438 (Mesopotamia): »They said to the blind man: 'What

doest thou seek?' He answered: 'Opening of the eyes'.« Ben Cheneb, No. 2117: »What does the blind man wish?« It seems that the version taken down by Mrs. Singer is the most correct one.«

36.

il-bêḍa mā tduqqish il-ḥagar.

An egg cannot break a stone. — Syrian.

»Here again we have the Egyptian form of a proverb heard in Syria.«

37.

'iddī 'êshak lil-farrân lawínnu yusruq nuṣṣu.

Give your bread to the baker, if even he steals half of it. — Syrian.

»Of the form of this proverb the same is to be said as of No. 35 and 36. The real Syrian wording is given by Einsler, No. 140 *(a'ṭi khubzak lal-khabbāz walau saraq nuṣṣo)* and by Shuqair, p. 11, No. 72. A slightly varying Egyptian version is found in Shuqair, p. 60, No. 43. Other instances are Socin, No. 252 (from Mesopotamia), Meissner, No. 32 (from Babylonia), Ben Cheneb, No. 151 (from Algiers). A few more references are given by Socin and Ben Cheneb.«

38.

il-ḥalla laqit ghaṭāyútha.

The saucepan found its cover. — Universal.

»Similar proverbs are given by Shuqair, p. 37, No. 38 (from Syria): »A kettle — and it found its cover,«

and by Ben Cheneb, No. 1482: »Every box finds its cover.« Socin, 130 (= Landberg, p. 254): »Every beard has a comb.«

39.

mā btimsik baṭṭikhtên fī yad.

Thou canst not hold two water-melons in one hand. — Universal.

»In almost the same wording this proverb is published in the following passages: Shuqair, p. 18, No. 26, and Landberg, p. 233 (from Syria); Socin, No. 401 (from Damascus); Bauer, No. 11 (from Jerusalem); Meissner, No. 22 (from Babylonia). The same thought is contained in a few other proverbs; Socin, No. 39, reads: »Can you tie two horses with one rope?« Ben Cheneb, No. 953: »The saddle does not hold two [riders]«; Shuqair, p. 117, No. 1 (from the Sudan): »The needle does not hold two threads, and the heart is not wide enough for two.«

40.

dänbit il-kälb mā tit'âdal, 'in ḥaṭṭêtu fī mât qâlib.

The dog's tail remains crooked, if thou even puttest it into a hundred moulds. — Syrian.

»This proverb seems to be a very favorite one with all Arabic speaking nations. Maḥmûd reports from Cairo: »The tail of a dog cannot be straightened all his life«; Shuqair from Syria (p. 24, No. 4): »They put the dog's tail into a mould forty years: it came back crooked!«, and from Egypt (p. 102, No. 59):

»How often shall I alter thee, while habit of thee takes hold?
The tail of a dog grows never straight, though they put it in a mould.«

Burckhardt, from Egypt (No. 285, = Green No. 36): »A dog's tail never stands straight«; Socin, from Mesopotamia (No. 432): »If the tail of a dog remains forty years in a mould, it comes out crooked«; Bauer, from Jerusalem (No. 86): »If thou placest a dog's tail in a hundred moulds, it remains crooked«; Yahuda, from Baghdad (I, No. 48): »They left the tail of a dog forty days in a reed, but it came out crooked«; Ben Cheneb, from the Maghrib (No. 776): »Place the tail of a grey-hound in a tube a hundred years, it will never stand straight.« It is ḥard to say which of all these versions is the original one. A few other versions are given by Ben Cheneb.«

41.

il-'akhkhe 'akh imrâtu wil-magnûna ḳilfit bi-ḥyâtu.

The brother is his wife's brother, and the mad woman swears by his life. — Syrian.

A brother only thinks of his wife while his sister loves him to adoration.

»According to Maḥmûd this proverb is known in Cairo.«

42.

ma bti'raf khêrī ta tgarrib ghêrī.

Thou wilt not know my worth until thou triest others. — Syrian.

»With this proverb No. 141 below may be compared. It is reported mainly from Syria and from the Maghrib, but Maḥmûd knew it from Cairo also, without remembering the exact words. The same version as above is presented by Socin, No. 4 (from Mesopotamia), by Jewett, No. 211 (from Syria); by Einsler, No. 161 (from Jerusalem); and by Ben Chenеb, No. 1683 (from the Maghrib, with other examples). Under No. 566, Ben Chenеb reads: »Try me, and ye will know [what] others than I [are worth].«

43.

'illī byâkul 'ala ḍirsu byinfa' nafsu.

He that eats on his own tooth does himself good. — Universal.

»Exactly the same form is reported by Maḥmûd from Cairo, by Bauer (No. 145) from Jerusalem and by Shuqair, p. 13, No. 111, from Syria, Egypt and the Sudan.«

44.

'illī byifqídnī bi'aḍma 'ana 'andu 'aẓîm.

He that remembers me with a bone — I am great in his sight. — Syrian.

»Only in Shuqair's publication have I found parallels. He quotes from Syria, on p. 48, No. 151: »With him who remembers me I am great«; from Egypt and the Sudan, on p. 107, No. 93: »He who remembers me, does not despise me«; and from the Sudan, on p. 131, No. 45: »He who names thee, does not despise thee.«

45.

'illi fi l-bädän mā bīghaiyáru illa l-käfän.

What is in the body only the shroud will alter. — Universal.

»The same version is given by Einsler, No. 107, and by Bauer, No. 143, from Jerusalem. Socin, No. 419, and Ben Cheneb, No. 1086, are to be translated: »A habit in the body is only changed by the shroud«; Ben Cheneb, No. 249, reads: »He who has a habit does not forget it all his life«; and Ben Cheneb, No. 247:

»He that has a habit never forsakes it,
Until he goes to the tomb which takes it.«

Other references are given by Ben Cheneb.«

46.

kulle dîk 'ala mazbaltu ṣaiyâḥ.

Every cock crows on his own dunghill. — Syrian.

»This proverb is universal. The same version as given above is found in the following places: Cairo, according to Maḥmûd; Jerusalem, according to Einsler, No. 12, and Bauer, No. 27; Damascus, according to Socin, No. 190; Northern Syria, according to Tallqvist, No. 139; Syria, according to Shuqair, p. 39, No. 38; the Sudan, according to Shuqair, p. 129, No. 9.

Since Ben Cheneb, No. 1513, reads: *kull kälb fī bâbu nabbâḥ* »Every dog barks at his door«, we should expect that the original combined both the cock and the dog; for the second proverb rhymes with the first

and has the same meaning. And, indeed, Shuqair, p. 102, No. 38, gives the combined version from Egypt. A different version of the second one is furnished by Tallqvist, No. 145: »A dog barks only in front of his door.«

47.

'id 'ala 'id yirmī be'id.

One hand with the other throws a distance. — Sudanese.

»Maḥmûd knew this proverb from Cairo, and Shuqair gives from Egypt, on p. 71, No. 349: »One hand with the other better than a single hand.«

48.

il-gämäl 'in shâf ḥurdubtu yuqa' weyiksar raqbitu.

If the camel saw his own ḥump he would fall and break his neck. — Syrian.

»The same, with a few variants that do not change the meaning, is found in two places: Shuqair p. 42, No. 30 (from Syria), and Yahuda I, No. 31 (from Baghdad). But Ben Cheneb, No. 575, gives: »The camel does not see his own hump, he sees only the hump of his brother.« The latter version implies also the interpretation, which is the same as that of Matthew VII, 3: »Why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye?« For further parallels see Ben Cheneb, No. 575.«

49.

kulle mânu yirga' li-'aṣlu.

Every one returns to his origin. — Syrian.

»Shuqair gives a proverb which may have the same meaning, viz. »Every man acts according to his origin«, p. 38, No. 27 and p. 40, p. 71, from Syria, Egypt and the Sudan.«

50.

môt ma' in-nâs raḥma.

Death in numbers is a mercy. — Universal.

»The meaning of this proverb is probably the same as that of the Latin *solamen miseris socios habuisse laborum.* — Einsler, No. 134, knows the same version from Jerusalem. And Ben Chenob, No. 1841, turns this thought somewhat differently: »He who dies as a stranger dies as a martyr.«

51.

'illī 'andu flûsu bint is-sulṭan 'arûsu.

He that has money, the sultan's daughter can be his bride. — Universal.

»Several forms of this proverb, all with practically the same meaning, are known. Shuqair, p. 74, No. 50 (from Egypt): »By means of thy money the sultan's daughter is thy bride.« Einsler, No. 127 (from Jerusalem): »He who pays his money — the sultan's daughter is his bride.« Bauer, No. 130 (from Jerusalem): »Pay thy money, and the sultan's daughter becomes thy

bride.« Jewett, No. 152 (from Syria): »Prepare the money before the bride.« Ben Cheneb, No. 660 (from West-Africa), and Tallqvist, No. 48 (from Syria): »Pay the money, and the bride will come.« For further references see Ben Cheneb.«

52.

il'ab wáḥdak tigī râḍī.

Play alone, thou wilt win. — Syrian.

53.

kulle mânu 'ala dînu 'allâh ye'înu.

God helps every one in his own religion. — Universal.

»According to Maḥmûd this proverb is known in Cairo.«

54.

râḥ il-mäskîn yifraḥ, mâ laqa maṭraḥ.

A poor man went to enjoy himself, but found no room. — Syrian.

»Maḥmûd quoted the same from Cairo; Shuqair gives a similar version from Egypt (p. 99, No. 69): »The sad man rose to enjoy himself, but found no room.«

55.

'azamna l-'aqra' kashaf râsu wekhauwáfna.

We invited the sore-head, he uncovered his head and frightened us. — Syrian.

»Einsler, No. 122 (Jerusalem) gives: »We brought the sore-head to keep us company, he took off his

cap and frightened us.« An almost identical version has been taken down by Huxley (No. 96) in Syria. Shuqair, p. 77, No. 15, knows from Egypt: »I brought the sore-head to keep me company, he uncovered his head and frightened me.« Burckhardt, No. 186, has the same form with the variant *gìt* »I came to« instead of *gibt* »I brought«. It is easily seen that *gibt* is the correct reading. Burckhardt adds the interpretation: »Friendship ceases when a person's real character is known.« Ben Cheneb, however, reads (No. 2342): »I brought the one-eyed man to keep me company, he opened his eye and he frightened me.«

56.

'illī bīkaiyil il-baḥr biṭāqiyītu.

He that measures the sea with his cap. — Universal.

»This is said of a person that tries to do absolutely foolish things. The same meaning is contained in several other proverbs. The nearest to the one under discussion are Jewett, No. 75 (from Syria): »He wants to transport the sea in a shell,« and Ben Cheneb, No. 2037 (from West-Africa): »He hunts the wind with a net.« Cf. also »A fool that eats the water!«, in the *Kitāb al-Amālī* by *al-Qālī*, Bulaq, 1324, II, p. 14.«

57.

färw il-'îra mā bīdäffī win daffa mā dâm.

A borrowed fur does not warm, and if it warms, it does not last. — Syrian.

»Shuqair, p. 20, No. 3, knows the same proverb from Syria and from the Sudan; Jewett, No. 88, knows it from Syria; Maḥmûd quoted it from Cairo. But in every case *tôb (taub)* »garment« stands for *färw* »fur«. It seems that *färw* is the better reading, since the fur is meant to keep warm. The first part, viz. »A borrowed cloak does not keep one warm« is given by Burckhardt, No. 171 (from Egypt), by Bauer, No. 155 (from Jerusalem), also in the Mustaṭraf, p. 28, l. 5 from below. Einsler, No. 71 (Jerusalem), has also this shorter form, but adds a second part which evidently does not belong to it. Ben Cheneb, No. 2627, is more general: »A borrowed object does not last, but it makes sorrow grow.« A similar thought is expressed in a proverb from Jerusalem: »Wearing a mat better than wearing a borrowed garment,« Einsler, No. 71, and Bauer, No. 82.«

58.

ṭûl ʿumrik ya zbîba fī râsik il-ʿûda.

All thy life, oh raisin, thou hast a piece of wood on thy head. — Syrian.

»Maḥmûd knew the same from Cairo. Other examples with slightly variant readings are given by Landberg, p. 136 (from Syria), Bauer, No. 45 (from Jerusalem), and Socin, No. 89 (from Mesopotamia). The meaning is that a man who has a bad habit cannot break with it; compare also above No. 45.«

59.

yallī zaiyina taʿālū ʾilêna.

Ye that are like unto us, come to us. — Syrian.

»The form given by Mrs. Singer is scarcely used in the vernacular Arabic of Syria. Maḥmûd quoted from Cairo *yallī zaiyína taʿālū ʿandína*, and this is not only correct for Cairo but also brings out the rhyme.«

60.

shâwir kebîrak wizghirak wirgaʿ liʿáqlak.

Ask the opinion of an older one and a younger one than thyself and return to thine own opinion. — Syrian.

»The same proverb is given by Shuqair, p. 87, No. 7, from Egypt. But from Syria he quotes on p. 27, No. 4: »Ask the opinion of a thousand people and disagree with a thousand people, and return to the advice of thine own soul.«

61.

mâl il-waqf bīhidd is-saqf.

Ecclesiastical money pulls the roof down. — Universal.

»Maḥmûd knew this saying from Cairo. The institution of the *waqf* or of the pious bequests is not liked in Cairo by those who live in houses that belong to it, for they say that the administration is very severe and merciless towards its tenants.«

62.

mā btiqdar tesaqqaf bi'id waḥda.

Thou canst not clap with one hand. — Universal.

»The same proverb with unimportant variant readings is given by Maḥmûd (from Cairo), by Shuqair, p. 17, No. 220, and by Landberg, p. 17 (from Syria), by Shuqair, p. 71, no. 347 (from Egypt), and by Ben Cheneb No. 2022, from the Maghrib.«

63.

gôzī biḥibbínī wa'ana qawîya, wakhûya wa'ana ghanîya.

My husband loves me when I am strong, and my brother [loves me] when I am rich. — Syrian.

»This proverb was known to Maḥmûd from Cairo.«

64.

il-kilma l-ḥilwa teṭalla' id-dabîba min khazqâha.

A sweet word will draw a snake out of its hole. — Universal.

»Proverbs with a similar meaning are the following. »Gentle speech will open an iron door«, Ben Cheneb No. 1540; »A sweet tongue will make a lioness suckle.« And in the Old Testament we read: »A soft tongue breaketh the bone«, Prov. 25, 15.«

65.

'in a'ṭêt uṣba' yâkhdū 'îd.

If thou givest a finger they will take a hand. — Universal.

»Parallels were not found in the books consulted, but are known from European languages.«

66.

fi l-wishshe mrâya wefi l-qafa midrâya.

In the face a mirror and in the back a winnower's fork. — Syrian.

»This proverb is given by Einsler, No. 18, from Jerusalem. There are two similar proverbs from the same place: »Before the people a mirror and behind them a shoe«, Einsler, No. 19, and Bauer, No. 36; »To the face they loved them«, Einsler, No. 20; »In the face a mirror and in the back a prickle«, Shuqair, p. 95, No. 39, and Maḥmûd (from Egypt).«

67.

'îd bitghassil 'îd.

One hand washes the other. — Universal.

»It seems that here for the first time the Arabic equivalent of the well-known *manus manum lavat* is found.«

68.

qable mā tis'al 'ad-dûr 'is'al 'al-gûr.

Before thou askest about the house, ask about the neighbour. — Universal.

»This is an old and wide-spread Arabic proverb. Its complete form »Ask about the neighbour before [thou askest about] the house, and about the companion before the journey« is given by Shuqair, p. 10, No. 49, by Landberg, p. 299 (both from Syria), and by Ben Cheneb, No. 145, No. 2726 (from West-Africa). The

shorter form, i. e. the one published above, appears in Einsler, No. 7, Bauer, No. 24 (both from Jerusalem) and Tallqvist, No. 69 (from Syria); it was known to Maḥmûd also. Socin, No. 157 (from Mesopotamia) reads: »Choose the neighbour before the house«; and Ben Cheneb, No. 2836: »Do not buy the house before thou buyest the neighbour.« The second part, i. e. »Choose the companion before the journey,« is given as a separate proverb by Socin, No. 156. Huxley's version (No. 94): »Prepare the companion before taking the road, and the food before the journey« is doubtless corrupted in its second half.«

69.

'in shuftínī badḥak ma'ûk, win mā shuftínī râḥit 'alêk.

If thou seest me, I am playing with thee; but if thou doest not see me, thou hast lost. — Syrian.

»A man that wishes to do harm to somebody, if caught, pretends that he was joking; but if he is not caught, the other one is lost.«

70.

zīwân bälädak wála qamḥ il-gharîb.

Thy country's tares better than strange wheat. — Syrian.

Better marry a poor girl in your own clan than a rich one from a strange one.

»This proverb was also published in about the same form by Socin No. 498 (from Damascus), by Einsler,

No. 56, and Bauer, No. 54 (both from Jerusalem). In Einsler, No. 55, there is read »barley« for »tares«, and Shuqair, p. 26, No. 5, as well as Jewett, No. 171, have *iṣ-ṣalîbī* instead of *il-gharîb*. The meaning of *iṣ-ṣalîbī* in this connection is not certain.«

71.

'illī bīshúfnī bil-'ên bashûfu bil-'intên.

He that sees to me with one eye, I shall see to him with both eyes. — Universal.

»Perhaps we should read *bil-itnên* »with both, scil. eyes« instead of *'intên*, although the feminine form of *'ên* occurs in modern Arabic. The other two examples of this proverb, viz. Shuqair, p. 108, No. 106 (from Egypt), and Einsler, No. 152 (from Jerusalem) have both the numeral »two« at the end and different verbs for »see«. The meaning is that a man who takes care of another one, is rewarded.«

72.

'imraq gī'ân 'an 'adûwak wála tímraq 'iryân.

Pass by your enemy hungry, but not naked. — Universal.

»This proverb is given by Shuqair in two versions, one from Syria and the Sudan (p. 15, No. 173), and another from Egypt and Syria (p. 94, No. 6). Maḥmûd knew it from Cairo.«

73.

il-gogn yeṣîḥ wil-baḥr misterîḥ.

The frog croaks and the river is resting. — Sudanese.

Some people are excited like the frog, and the world goes quietly on.

»The word *gogn* for »frog« is not known to me in other Arabic dialects. It is probably the same word as *qauqan*, for which Dozy's *Supplément aux Dictionnaires Arabes* gives the meanings »snail, oyster, turtle«.

74.

'illī taḥte 'iḅṭu misalla tunkhusu.

He that has a packing needle under his arm-pit will feel the prick. — Syrian.

»Shuqair, p. 13, No. 133, gives the same version from Syria, with the variant *bâṭ* for *'iḅṭ*, and *btunkhuzu* at the end. But Socin, No. 81 (from Mesopotamia), reads: »If a man has a packing-needle in his heart, it will prick him.« This version is due to somebody who wished to explain the metaphor in the proverb itself, but succeeded only in mixing up the literal and she allegorical sense.«

75.

môt ta 'aḥúbbak.

Die that I may love thee. — Universal.

»The meaning of this proverb corresponds to that of the Latin *de mortuis nil nisi bene.* The same idea is expressed in a few other Arabic sayings. Einsler,

No. 112, (from Jerusalem) has: »Die so that I (read *tannī)* may build a tomb over thy grave; I did not love thee in the world, but I have begun to love thee in the grave.« Shuqair, p. 73, No. 46, knows from Egypt: »After he went to the cemetery, there was sugar in his mouth.« This means that all spoke well behind him. Maḥmûd's version from Cairo had the variant *f-ṭîzu* »in his anus« instead of *fī ḥanaku* »in his mouth.« This is probably the original version.«

76.

qâḍi l-'aulâd shanaq ḥâlu.

The children's judge hanged himself. — Universal.

»Exactly the same form is published in the following passages: Shuqair, p. 35, No. 1; Tallqvist, No. 120; Berggren, col. 621, under *pendre,* all three from Syria. Shuqair, p. 96, No. 2, gives this proverb from Egypt with the variant *rûḥu* for *ḥâlu,* and Socin, No. 243, from Mesopotamia with another word for »hang«. The meaning of the whole is of course that a man who would have to pronounce judgment to children would be exasperated.«

77.

kulle ḥâga 'and il-'aṭṭâr fîh, 'illa ḥubbínī bil-ghaṣbe mā fîh.

Everything can be found with the druggist, except »love me by force«. — Universal.

»This proverb is given in almost the same form by several other authorities: Shuqair, p. 39, No. 44 (from

Syria); Socin, No. 103 (from Damascus); Einsler, No. 205, and Bauer No. 76 (from Jerusalem). Some other references are given by Socin.«

78.

mā fih kebîr 'illa l-gämûl.

Only the camel is big (or 'great'). — Syrian.

»Jewett, No. 177, has the following: »I deem nothing great except the camel.« But his interpretation, which refers to a man that sees greatness only in the possessor of a great body, does not seem to fit the proverb given above. Huxley, No. 84, reads: »For him there is nothing big except the camel.« Again Burckhardt, No. 616: »Not everything crooked-necked is a camel« is scarcely to be compared here, but rather with No. 86 below.«

79.

maḥabbit il-ghûl líbnu.

The love of the ghoul is for his own son. — Syrian.

80.

qalbī 'ala wälädī weqalbe wälädī 'ala l-ḥagar.

My heart is for my child, and my child's heart is for a stone. — Syrian.

»Maḥmûd knew this proverb from Cairo; Shuqair quotes it from Syria and from Egypt (p. 37, No. 51) and adds that it is a women's proverb.«

81.

'uṣbu' bakht wala khazne mâl.

One finger of good luck better than a chest of gold. — Universal.

»Several proverbs resembling this one are known. E. g. Burckhardt, No. 549: »A handful of consideration rather than a *wêba* (i. e. about 33 cubic litres) of riches«; Shuqair, p. 100, Nr. 101 (from Egypt): »An inch of good luck rather than an acre of cleverness«; Shuqair, p. 101, No. 19: »A handful of consideration rather than an *ardebb* (about 198 cubic litres) of money«; Ben Cheneb, No. 1976: »An ounce of good luck rather than a hundred-weight of intelligence«; No. 2248: »An ounce of consideration rather than a hundred-weight of money.«

82.

mâl il-ḥarâm lil-ḥarâm yisḥab.

Ill gotten goods go to the devil. — Universal.

»Maḥmûd knew a similar proverb from Cairo without remembering the exact wording. Tallqvist, No. 167, from Syria) says: »Ill gotten goods do not bear fruit.«

83.

min qillit il-khêl shaddū 'ala l-kilâb is-surûg.

For the want of horses they saddled the dogs. — Syrian.

»Other versions which contain almost the same words are given in the following instances: Shuqair,

p. 50, No. 213 (from Syria and Egypt); Socin, No. 100 (from Mesopotamia); Bauer, No. 87 (from Jerusalem).«

84.

'illī byishrab min il-bîr mā yirmī fîh ḥagar.

He that drinks from a well does not throw a stone in it. — Universal.

»Almost the same version is found in the following passages: Einsler, No. 75 (from Jerusalem); Socin, No. 385 (from Mesopotamia); Shuqair, p. 54, No. 14 (from Syria), p. 74, No. 66 (from Egypt); Burckhardt, No. 151 (from Egypt). A similar idea is expressed in Burckhardt, No. 361: »A tree that affords thee shade, — do not pray for its being cut down«; and in Shuqair, p. 74, No. 64 (from Egypt): »The house from which thou eatest — do not pray for its ruin.«

85.

id-dubbâna z-zeghîra bitghâliṭ il-manâfis.

The little fly makes one sick. — Universal.

»Burckhardt and Ben Cheneb have similar proverbs. The former (No. 286) reads: »A fly is nothing, yet it creates loathsomeness;« the latter (No. 820 and No. 2453): »The fly does not kill, but it bothers [one]«.

86.

mâ hû kulle ṣaffe ṣawânî bīqûl 'an ḥâlu ḥalawânī.

Not every one who puts out pastry-trays can call himself a confectioner. — Syrian.

»Shuqair, p. 44, No. 44, quotes from Syria: »Not every one who puts out pastry-trays, can say: 'I am a confectioner'.« Landberg, p. 120 (and accordingly Snouck Hurgronje, Dr. C. Landberg's »Studien« nachgeprüft, p. 2), leaves out the *mā* »not« in the beginning: the whole is then a rhetorical question. Other renderings of the same idea are the following: »Not every one who has blackened his face can say: 'I am a blacksmith'«, Burckhardt, No. 591; »Not everything crooked-necked is a camel,« Burckhardt, No. 616, cf. above, No. 78; »Not every one that hammers, becomes a blacksmith,« Socin, No. 394.«

87.

la tqùl lil-meghannī ghannī wala lir-raqqâṣ urquṣ.

Never ask a singer to sing nor a dancer to dance. — Syrian.

»Almost exactly the same as above is given by Einsler, No. 121, from Jerusalem. Shuqair, p. 55, No. 30, quotes this proverb as Syrian and Egyptian with the variant *rāqūṣ* for *raqqâṣ*. Tallqvist, No. 150 (from Northern Syria), has *rāqiṣ* in that place and adds *'ömrak*, i. e. »never in thy life« at the beginning. In Ben Cheneb's No. 1606 (from the Maghrib) the second part of the proverb differs: »Do not say to a singer 'sing', and do not say to a prayer 'pray'!« A number of other references are given by Ben Cheneb. Maḥmûd knew the proverb from Cairo, but used, of course, *ma tqulshe*, instead of *la tqùl*.«

88.

la twarri l-mashnûq ḥable wala l-maḥrûq nâr.

Do not show a man that is hanged a rope nor a burnt man fire. — Syrian.

89.

yā ḥâfir il-gurra yā wâqi' fîha.

Oh thou who diggest a pit thou wilt fall thyself into it. — Universal.

»This proverb is well known in East and West. Into European languages it has come from the Bible. For Prov. 26, 27 reads: »Whoso diggeth a pit shall fall therein.« A few of the Arabic versions of this old saying may be cited here. Shuqair, p. 13, No. 119, p. 48, No. 170 (from Syria): »He that digs a pit for his brother, will fall into it.« Shuqair, p. 113, No. 7 (from Egypt): »Oh thou who diggest a pit, dig and make it shallow; for he who digs a pit for his brother will fall into it.« Spitta, No. 218 (from Egypt): »He that digs will go down.« Socin, No. 154 (from Mesopotamia), gives a somewhat corrupt rendering of Shuqair's first version, and Ben Cheneb, No. 348, gives the same meaning as Shuqair with a few other words. Both Socin and Ben Cheneb refer to a number of other parallels.«

90.

'in shufte 'a'ma 'iḍrâbu, mā 'inta 'aḥsan min rabbu.

If thou seest a blind man beat him, thou art not better than God. — Syrian.

»This saying, which must have originated from a great pessimist who bore a deep rancour in his heart against the administration of this world, is given by Shuqair in a Syrian and an Egyptian version. The former is found on p. 11, No. 66, and reads: »Beat the blind man and break his staff: thou art not more just than God who made him blind.« The latter is on p. 68, No. 267: »If thou seest a blind man, beat him and take his food from his pocket; thou art not more merciful than God!«

91.

ma tkhâf ghêr min il-mâ' il-hâdiye.

Beware only of the quiet water. — Syrian.

»Other authorities report this proverb from Syria also. Shuqair, p. 11, No. 77, reads: »Go to a swollen sea, but do not go to a quiet sea!«; Huxley, No. 59: »Ford a boisterous river, but do not ford a smooth river;« Jewett, No. 32: »Fear only the quiet river.« Berggren, p. 559 (under *mer*), adds a second part as a sort of interpretation: »for the quiet [river] inundates the valley.« I believe that this addition (*in-nahr il-hâdī yegharriq il-wâdī*) was originally a proverb by itself. Two more references are given by Jewett.«

92.

id-dîk il-faṣîḥ min il-bêḍa bīṣîḥ.

The clever cock crows from the egg. — Syrian.

»The word translated »clever« by Mrs. Singer means originally »eloquent,« and refers here to a cock that crows well. This proverb is often quoted in Cairo, too, and is reported in almost every single collection of Arabic proverbs published hitherto. Exactly the same form as above is given by Bauer 152 (from Jerusalem). Other examples have the same text, but read *yeṣîḥ* instead of *bīṣîḥ;* they are the following: Shuqair, p. 24, No. 35, and Landberg, p. 247 (both from Syria); Socin, No. 422 (from Mesopotamia); Spitta, No. 28 (from Egypt); Ben Cheneb, No. 809 (from the Maghrib). And this seems to be indeed the original from which all other versions have deviated. A small change is that presented by Green (No. 3), who reads *kätkût* »pullet« instead of *dîk* »cock«. A rather rash and senseless mistake is found in Einsler's version (No. 174): it reads »crows in the egg«. Two changes have crept into Jewett's and Huxley's version (Jewett, No. 6, Huxley, No. 49): »The lively *(fḥîḥ* for *faṣîḥ)* cock crows from under its mother.« This version is intelligible, but Tallqvist's authority scarcely thought of the real situation when he dictated (No. 56): »The eloquent cock crows from its mother's womb.« Again Burckhardt, No. 48, gives two renderings, none of which seems to be original as they lack the rhyme in the Arabic; they read: »The fine pullet shows its excellence from the egg«, and »The intelligent *(nâṣiḥ)* pullet crows from the egg«. Socin, Landberg and Ben Cheneb refer

even to other instances of this saying. Its meaning is the same as that of Prov. 20, 11: »Even a child is known by his doings.«

93.

mā biḥinn 'al-'ûd ghêr qishru.

Only the bark has pity on the wood. — Syrian.

»The same is found in Shuqair's collection, p. 43, No. 6 (from Syria).«

94.

mā bīḥukke ḍahrak ghêr ḍafrak.

Only thine own nail scratches thy back. — Universal.

»Maḥmûd knew this proverb from Cairo, and Shuqair, p. 105, No. 41, gives it in almost the same form from Egypt. And there are only very slight variant readings in the following instances: Socin, No. 114 (from Damascus); Tallqvist, No. 160 (from the Lebanon); Einsler, No. 54, and Bauer No. 8 (both from Jerusalem); Spitta, No. 131, and Green, No. 119 (from Egypt). Ben Cheneb, No. 1706 (from the Maghrib), and Shuqair, p. 44, No. 50 (from Syria) unite two metaphors with the same meaning. The former reads: »Only thine own eye-lid weeps for thee and only thine own nail scratches for thee«; the latter has: »Only mine own nails scratch for me, and only mine own feet make me walk.« And Ben Cheneb refers to many other instances.«

95.

kulle mânu yi'raf marârit tummu.

Every one knows the bitterness of his own mouth. — Universal.

96.

mā fîh yeqûl 'an 'asalu ḥâmuḍ.

Nobody will say that his honey is sour. — Syrian.

»Shuqair, p. 43, No. 20 (from Syria) says the same of the oil, and Socin, No. 86 (from Mesopotamia) of the milk. Shuqair reads: »Nobody will call his oil dreggy«, Socin: »Nobody will say: 'My milk is sour'.«

97.

'illī dabbar mā gâ' willī ràqa' mā yi'ra.

He that is careful will not hunger, and he that patches will not be naked. — Universal.

»Bauer, Einsler, and Ben Cheneb, give proverbs which contain the same thought. Bauer (No. 137) reads: »He that patches, will not be naked«; Einsler (No. 31): »She who patches will not be naked; and she who economizes will not hunger.« Mrs. Einsler has heard this proverb from women and, therefore, gives the verbs in the feminine form: this is probably the original. From Ben Cheneb's collection the following may be compared here. No. 221: »He that patches his garment will not be naked«; No. 270: »He that does not patch, has no clothes«; No. 785 (= No. 2443): »The economizer of food does not die«;

No. 2304: »Economy is half of life, and it has even been said, it is the whole life«; No. 2987: »He that sews his garment will not be naked.« In the Bible we find similar allusions; Prov. 10, 4 reads: »He becometh poor that dealeth with a slack hand: but the hand of the diligent maketh rich;« and 19, 15: »Slothfulness casteth into deep sleep; and an idle soul shall suffer hunger.«

98.

il-mâ fil-bîr biddâha tadbîr.

The water in the well wants looking after. — Syrian.

»Einsler, No. 74, reports the same from Syria, and Shuqair, p. 105, No. 33, quotes from Egypt *il-mâ fiz-zîr yiḥibb it-tadbîr* »the water in the jar likes economy.«

99.

il-ma'rûf 'ind il-ḥurre dên we-'ind in-nadle 'adâwa.

A favour with a good man is a debt and with a bad man enmity. — Sudanese.

»Shuqair knows this proverb from Syria and from the Sudan, Landberg from Syria and Egypt. The Syrian (and according to Landberg, Egyptian) version is: »The bread of men is a debt with [real] men, but with bad men alms«, Shuqair, p. 22, No. 5; Landberg, p. 49. The Sudanese, Shuqair, p. 122, No. 7, is shorter: »Favours to men are debts.«

100.

kulle khariṛ yit'allaq min 'arqibu.

Every sheep is hung by its own leg. — Universal.

»The other versions of this proverb vary with regard to the word for sheep (or goat) and to the word for leg (or heel, or hock). They are found in the following places: Shuqair, p. 39, No. 50 (from Syria, Egypt and the Sudan); Landberg, p. 128, and Huxley, No. 83 (from Syria); Burckhardt, No. 545, and Green, No. 46 (from Egypt); Socin, No. 434 (from Mesopotamia); and Ben Cheneb, No. 1493 (from the Maghrib). The last two may be consulted for further references.«

101.

il-ḥêṭa l-waṭya l-kulle yenuṭṭâha.

Every one jumps a low wall. — Universal.

»Maḥmûd knew the proverb from Cairo. In almost the same form it is also given by Shuqair, p. 79, No. 46, Spitta, No. 45, and Green, No. 93 (all three from Egypt); and by Jewett, No. 186 (from Syria). Socin, No. 465 (from Mesopotamia), however, has another version: »Every one can ride on a small donkey.« But this is scarcely original.«

102.

duqqe 'ala l-bâb tisma' gawâb.

Knock at the door, thou wilt hear an answer. — Syrian.

»Shuqair (p. 48, No. 177) knows this proverb from Syria and Egypt in the form: »He that knocks at the door, hears an answer«; the same is given by Burckhardt, No. 604, Green, No. 51 (from Egypt), by Socin, No. 191 (from Mesopotamia) and by Jewett, No. 14 (from Syria). But Tallqvist, No. 55 (from Syria) and Ben Cheneb, No. 791 (from the Maghrib) present the verb in the same form as Mrs. Singer. Matthew 7, 7: »Knock, and it shall be opened unto you« must, therefore, have been a popular saying among the Jews.«

103.

'illī mâ-hu kâro yā nâro.

If it is not his trade, woe is him! — Syrian.

»This proverb is only found in Syria; I have, therefore, left the *o* in *kâro* and in *nâro*. Einsler, No. 198, knows this proverb from Jerusalem and interprets: »He that does something out of his profession is to be pitied.«

104.

'in 'akkalte 'ishbi', win ḍarabte 'ûgi'.

If thou feedest, satisfy; and if thou beatest, hurt. — Syrian.

»The two parts of this proverb sometimes exchange their position; but except for this, it is practically the same in Syria, Egypt, and the Maghrib, as we may see from Shuqair, p. 48, No. 177 (Syria and Egypt), Socin,

No. 409 (Mesopotamia), Bauer, No. 102 (Jerusalem), and Ben Cheneb, No. 68 and No. 2228. Other references are given by Socin and Ben Cheneb.«

105.

maksûr lā tâkul, ṣaḥîḥ lā tíksir we-kul ta-tishba'.

Broken do not eat, whole do not break, and eat until thou art satisfied. — Syrian.

»The same proverb is to be found in the following places: Shuqair, p. 29, No. 11 (from Syria), p. 47, No. 133 (from Syria and Egypt), Landberg, p. 262 (from Syria and Egypt).«

106.

il-bêt illī ṛabbânī mā harab we-khallânī.

The house that brought me up did not run away and leave me. — Universal.

»Maḥmûd knew this proverb from Cairo, and Einsler, No. 106, quotes it from Jerusalem.«

107.

midde riglak 'ala qadde frâshak.

Stretch thy leg as long as thy bed. — Universal.

»This proverb is wide spread among Arabic speaking nations. Often it is turned around and begins: »As long as thy bed stretch thy leg.« Instead of »bed« other versions have »rug« or »carpet« or «cover«, and instead of *rigl* most of the Syrian versions have *'igr*.

In the books consulted it is found as follows: Shuqair, p. 32, No. 41, p. 45, No. 87, Landberg, p. 236, Tallqvist, No. 105, Huxley, No. 68 (all from Syria); Bauer, No. 150, and Einsler, No. 179 (from Jerusalem); Burckhardt, No. 411, and Spitta, No. 148 (from Egypt); Socin, No. 201 (from Mesopotamia) and Ben Cheneb, No. 1232 (from the Maghrib). The last two give some more references. Maḥmûd knew it from Cairo, too.«

108.

il-bêt ʿâlī wiṣ-ṣêt khâlī.

The house is high, but the reputation is empty. — Syrian.

»Proverbs that may be compared with this differ in some respects from Mrs. Singer's reading. Maḥmûd quoted: *iṣ-ṣêt wala l-ghina* »Reputation is better than riches« (from Cairo), and the same is reported from Egypt by Shuqair, p. 89, No. 23. From Syria Shuqair gives (p. 29, No. 23): »A good reputation is better than heaps of money.« The positive of what is given above in the negative we find with Ben Cheneb, No. 127: »[He has] a high name but an empty house.« But this seems to be rather meant as a reproach, as may be seen from the parallels quoted by Ben Cheneb.«

109.

yā mistaʿgil istanna lamma-kallímak.

Oh thou who art in a hurry, wait till I speak to thee. — Universal.

47178

»Tallqvist gives this proverb, in other words, but with the same meaning, from Syria (No. 199). Ben Cheneb, No. 1999, quotes from the Maghrib: »Oh thou who art in a hurry, why doest thou hurry? Everything is in the power of God!«

110.

yallī maṣārînu ṭâliʿ ʾiddînī laʾuṭaṭī.

Thou who hast thy entrails out, give them to me for my cat. — Syrian.

The one has pain and grief, and the other shows no feeling.

111.

ʾana ḥâmil liḥyitī weʾinte taʿbân fîha?

I carry my beard, and thou art weary of it? — Syrian.

»Berggren, col. 94, under *barbe* (from Syria), and Socin, No. 398 (from Mesopotamia) give: »The one carries his beard, and the other is weary of it.« Spitta, No. 193 (from Egypt), reads: »The one carries his beard; why is the other weary of it?« Maḥmûd quoted from Cairo: »I am carrying my beard; why art thou weary?«

112.

ʿâyiz tâkul balaḥ we-bitkhâf min ish-sôk?

Thou wishest to eat dates and art afraid of the spikes? — Sudanese.

You want the sweetness of things, but do not want the trouble.

»The same idea is expressed in two other proverbs. Shuqair, p. 66, No. 193 (from Egypt), says: »He who eats the honey, must expect the bites of the bees«, and almost the same is known from the Maghrib, Ben Cheneb, No. 338. Maḥmûd's quotation from Cairo is a more general one, viz. *ḥalâwa bala nâr ma-yimkin-shī* »sweets without fire are impossible.«

113.

il-bêt bêt abûna wil-kilâb ṭāḥûna.

The house is our father's house, and the dogs have driven us out. — Syrian.

»Maḥmûd knew from Cairo: »The house is our father's house, and the strangers have chased us away.« Practically the same is given by Spitta, No. 287 (from Egypt). Shuqair, p. 74, No. 65 (from Egypt), and Landberg, p. 86 (from Syria), read »the people« instead of »the dogs«, whereas Ben Cheneb, No. 763 (from the Maghrib), has a version which corresponds exactly with the one given by Mrs. Singer, as far as the meaning of the words is concerned. Burckhardt, No. 31, has: »The nuptials are the nuptials of our father, yet the people fight with us,« and adds interpreting: »Those who have the strongest claim find themselves dispossessed of the advantage by others.«

114.

il-bêt bítna wil-qamar gárna.

The house is our house, and the moon is our neighbour. — Syrian.

»This proverb tends to show that a man is independent in his own house. To this idea a number of other proverbs allude; e. g. »Good morning, neighbour, thou art in thy house, and I am in mine«, which is often quoted. Burckhardt, No. 70, has: »To us belong the house and the talking (therein)«, and Bauer, No. 135 (from Jerusalem): »A house of thine own, master of thyself.«

115.

bûs il-kâlb fī tummo ta-tâkhud gharaḍak minno.

Kiss the dog on his mouth until thou achievest thy desire. — Universal.

»This proverb is indeed known everywhere, but the form in which Mrs. Singer heard it is Syrian. Einsler, No. 50, and Bauer, No. 53, have it in the same form. Almost the same is given by Ben Chenob, Nos. 448 and 2357. Other versions are the following: »If thou hast an affair with the dog, address him 'Sir'!«, Shuqair, p. 69, No. 287 (from Syria and Egypt), p. 120, No. 78 (from the Sudan), Spitta, No. 197, and Green, No. 142 (from Egypt); »He who needs the dog says to him: »Good morning, my lord«, Jewett, No. 18 (from Syria); »Address the dog 'my uncle' so that he may cross the river

with thee«, Ben Cheneb, No. 1391; »When the monkey reigns, dance before him«, Burckhardt, No. 87; »Prostrate thyself before the wicked monkey in his time [of power]«, Burckhardt, No. 339. — Other references are to be found with Ben Cheneb, No. 448 and No. 1391.«

116.

illī bīshârik il-qôm 'arbe'în yôm, bīṣîr minhum yā byirḥal 'anhum.

He that lives with a clan forty days becomes one of them or leaves them. — Bedouin.

»Maḥmûd knew this proverb from Cairo in the following form: *'illī ye'âshir il-qôm 'arbe'în yôm yā yeṣîr minhum yā yib'id 'anhum.* The same complete form is reported by Shuqair, on p. 31, No. 5, from Syria, and on p. 108, No. 117 from Egypt; also by Tallqvist, No. 99, from the Lebanon. Other versions omit the second part and emphasize only that a man who lives with other people forty days becomes one of them or adopts their habits; such are Burckhardt, No. 644, and Green, No. 65 (from Egypt); Bauer, No. 119 (from Jerusalem); Socin, No. 179 (from Mesopotamia); Yahuda I, No. 42 (from Babylonia); Ben Cheneb, No. 1825 (from the Maghrib). Shuqair, p. 91, l. 9, specifies in another way: »Live with the prayer, and thou wilt pray; live with the singer, and thou wilt sing; live with the sad, and thou wilt be sad.«

117.

'iftakarna l-bâsha bâsha 'atārîto râdjil.

We thought the Pasha a Pasha, but he is only a man. — Lebanese.

»There are a few other Arabic proverbs with a similar meaning, but none of them is so expressive and drastic as this one.«

118.

in-nakar yiksar il-ḥagar.

Bickering will break a stone. — Sudanese.

»The word *nakar* would be new in this meaning. But I think that *naqar* should be read; in that case the translation would be: »[Continuous] picking breaks the stone.«

119.

il-'îd yôm wir-ra'na qatalit ḥâlha.

The feast is one day, and the silly woman killed herself with work. — Syrian.

120.

ba'd ummī wabûya l-kulle gharîb.

After my mother and my father all are strangers. — Universal.

»Maḥmûd quoted from Cairo: »After my mother and my father I have no friend.« Shuqair, p. 121, No. 15, quotes from the Sudan: »After thy mother and thy father the people are neighbours.« And Ben Cheneb, No. 2274 (from the Maghrib) reads: »After father and mother all are liars.«

121.

yā qôm 'ilak yôm.

Oh adversary, thou wilt have a day. — Sudanese.

»The word *qôm* means in modern Arabic »state of war«, »enemies«, and sometimes even a single »adversary.« — A similar proverb with a more general meaning was quoted by Maḥmûd from Cairo: *kulle minna luh yôm* »everyone of us has a day.«

122.

illī ma'o mā byimna'o, libs il-ḥarir mā biqla'o.

He that has, nothing hinders him, and he never changes his silk raiment. — Syrian.

»The words and the meaning of this proverb are not altogether certain. It means probably that a rich man can do what he pleases and has money enough to wear always a silk garment.«

123.

il-ḥumma wala l-môt.

Better fever than death. — Sudanese.

»This idea is rendered somewhat differently by Ben Cheneb's No. 225: »He who saw death, is content with fever.«

124.

ṣammid nafsak yeṣamdûk in-nâs, 'affir nafsak ye'afrûk il-firâkh.

Keep thyself up, and people will honour thee; go low, and the chickens will cover thee with dust. — Syrian.

125.

'in kânu 'alf, 'a'azze min 'ênaiya.

If they (i. e. my children) were a thousand, they would be dearer than my eyes. — Universal.

»The same force of maternal love is expressed in a proverb from West-Africa, quoted by Ben Chenеb, No. 1336: »[I will sacrifice] my own heart rather than my children.«

126.

il-qamḥ bîdûr we-byirdja' laṭ-ṭaḥûna.

The wheat goes all around and returns to the mill. — Lebanese.

»Practically the same version is given by Shuqair, p. 100, No. 94, Burckhardt, No. 122, and Green, No. 18 (all from Egypt). Ben Chenеb, No. 614, has another word for »wheat« and another one for »mill« than those above. The version given by Tallqvist, No. 46 (from the Lebanon), is undoubtedly the original one, viz. *il-ḥabbi biddûr ubtirdja' lil-kûr* »the grain goes around and returns to the funnel«. The rhyme of *kûr* with *biddûr* was certainly intended; but the meaning of *kûr* »funnel of the mill« was not known in other dialects, and so a better known word was substituted«.

127.

ṭayâbit ish-shuṭûr lamma lal-qubûr.

The sweetness of the breasts is until the grave. — Sudanese.

»The form and the meaning of this proverb are not quite certain. The word *shuṭùr*, written *shoutour* by Mrs. Singer, must be the plural of *shaṭr*«.

128.

'illī bīḥarrik is-sam bīḍùqo.

He that stirs poison will taste it. — Syrian.

»Similar proverbs are the following: »The man who cooks (prepares) the poison, will taste it«, Shuqair, p. 90, Nr. 4 (from Egypt), p. 127, No. 23 (from the Sudan); »The one who cooks the poison, is the one who eats it«, Bauer, No. 1 (from Jerusalem), Jewett, Nr. 33 (from Syria); »He who cooks a bad thing, eats of it«, Burckhardt, No. 640, Green, Nr. 60 (from Egypt).«

129.

il-'aṣîl byâkul fûl wibyirdja' lil-'uṣùl.

The man of good breeding eats beans and returns to his breeding. — Syrian.

»Beans are the staple-food of the lower classes in the Near East, especially in Egypt. This fact explains another proverb which probably has a similar meaning as the one above, viz. Ben Cheneb, Nr. 1138: »Beans have satisfied even Pharao«.

130.

fi l-ḥabs yâmā fîh maẓālìm.

How many are unjustly in prison! — Universal.

»Maḥmûd (from Cairo) and Shuqair, p. 57, No. 30 (from Syria and from Egypt), read: *yâ mâ fi l-ḥabs maẓālîm*, and Spitta, Nr. 196, has the same version, adding only a *min* before the last word«.

131.

ghabanit il-'arabìya barradnâha fi s-sirrîya.

Our rage on the Arab woman we have cooled on the slave-girl. — Sudanese.

»The interpretation of the form and the meaning of this proverb is not altogether certain«.

132.

'illī bīmūsùh bīdūqûh willī bi'malùh bilqûh.

What one makes, one tastes, and what one does, one finds. — Sudanese.

»The first part of this proverb may be compared with No. 128 above. The word *bīmūsùh* is to be derived from a verb *màs* which corresponds to classical Arabic *mātha*«.

133.

ya 'imm il-'umûm ḥafrit il-qubùr.

The grave is the mother of all. — Sudanese.

»There is some doubt about the form and the meaning of this proverb. If Mrs. Singer's interpretation be correct, the literal translation would be: »Oh mother of all, hole of the grave«. But it is also possible that *ya'imm* might be the same as the classical *ya'ummu*;

then we should translate: »The hole of the grave awaits (literally »is before«) all«.

134.

yā sâ'ī fên ir-rā'ī?

Oh possessor, where is the shepheard? — Sudanese.

135.

kūnū 'ikhwân witḥázbū.

Be brothers, but keep accounts. — Universal.

»The form *tḥázbū* stands for *tḥúsbū* and this for *tḥâsibū*. The latter is written of course with Arabic characters in the following two instances: Burckhardt (No. 548) reads: »Be brothers and keep between you the accounts of merchants«; Shuqair, p. 102, No. 60 (from Egypt): »Be brothers and keep accounts justly«.

136.

ḍarb il-ḥabîb zebîb we-ḥidjârto tîn.

A dear one's blows are raisins, and his stones are figs. — Lebanese.

»There are a number of parallels to this proverb. Maḥmûd quoted: »The blows of a friend are sweeter than eating raisins«. Shuqair gives on p. 89, l. 12 (from Egypt): »The blows of a friend are like eating raisins«, and on p. 30, l. 6: »The blows of a friend are raisins and his stones pomegranates«. Burckhardt, No. 387, Snouck, No. 64, Ben Cheneb, No. 2594, and Mustaṭraf, p. 31, l. 1, have the same meaning as the

first of the two versions quoted from Shuqair. But Yahuda II, No. 30 (from the Yemen), differs from the others: »The blows of a friend are a wholesome remedy, and his cursing is a lesson«.

137.

mâ-hu kullu ghazl?

Is it not all woven?

Two brothers went on the pilgrimage to Mecca and left their wives at home. One woman was very fond of her husband, and she had woven the best and whitest cotton into a turban and sewn his shirts with the smallest stitches. But the other woman did not care as long as her work was done. — One day a pilgrim came back, and both women ran to ask news of their husbands. »Oh«, said one, »didst thou see two men, brothers, dressed alike?« »Yes« said the man, »they looked very well and happy«. »But did you notice particularly«, said one woman, »him with the finely woven turban and the nicely sewn shirt?« »Oh, my child«, replied the man, »it is all woven«!

»The origin of this proverb is not indicated by Mrs. Singer. Its meaning appears from the attached story. But, to judge from other proverbs one should rather expect a different meaning, viz.: »Not everything woven is alike«. Maḥmûd quoted from Cairo: *mush kulle ṣanf zaiye baʿḍ*, »Not every kind is like the other«, and according to Ben Cheneb, Nô. 723 and No. 2012, it is

a sign of narrowness of mind to think that »everything green is grass«, or, according to No. 1515, that »everything round is a watermelon«.

138.

'uṭbúkhī yā gárya kallif yā ṣidī.

Cook, oh slavê-girl, spend, oh my master. — Egyptian.

It is for the master to spend, if he wants good food.

»The same proverb is given by Spitta, No. 97. Maḥmûd quoted it in a somewhat plainer form: »He said: »Cook, oh slave girl!« She said unto him: »Spend, oh my master«.

139.

sittī makkâra wa'ánæ 'amkar minha.

My mistress is sly, but I am more sly than she is. — Egyptian.

A woman counted the pieces of meat put on the fire, but the slave-girl cut a bit of every one so that she could eat enough.

»A similar idea is expressed a little more drastically by Ben Cheneb, No. 2886: »How sweet is it to cheat a cheater!«

140.

ma bti'raf il-insân ghêr lamma tgarríbu.

Thou canst not know a person until thou hast tried him. — Universal.

»Burckhardt, No. 592, quotes »The tongue of experience has most truth«. — No. 42 above may also be compared with this proverb«.

141.

'aznab il-khuḍârgī šhanaqu l-'aṭṭâr.

A green-grocer sinned, and they hanged a druggist. — Universal.

»This proverb applies to the mistakes that are often made in the administration of justice. A very drastic example of this is told in Mr. Willmore's grammar of The Spoken Arabic of Egypt, p. 35. The story given there in Arabic reads translated as follows:

»The story of the wronged thief.

Once there was a thief. He went once upon a day to rob the house of a merchant. He climbed the wall and seized the window. The window came off in his hand, he fell to the ground and broke his leg. Then he went away and walked limping to the judge and said unto him: »I was going to rob the house of N. N. the merchant. I climbed the wall and seized the window; but the window came off in my hand, I fell down and broke my leg«. The judge ordered a soldier to go and bring the owner of the house. He went and brought him, and the latter came before the judge. The judge asked him: »How is it, man, that thy window is not well fastened? Behold, this poor thief here went to rob thy house; he climbed the wall, seized the window, and the window came off in his hand; so he fell and broke his leg. Now this time thou art guilty.« The owner of the house said unto him: »What does that concern me, oh my lord? Have I perhaps put in the window?

That is the business of the carpenter who made it.« The judge said: »Bring the carpenter!« They went and brought him. The judge said to him: »Why hast thou not put in the window as it ought to be done? On thy account this thief who went to rob the house of this man here fell down and broke his leg.« He said to him: »What does that concern me? That is not my business. That is the business of the mason who put the window in the wall.« The judge said: »Well, bring the mason!« They went and brought him. The judge asked him: »Why hast thou not put that window in properly?« He answered: »By God, my lord, when I was building that house a pretty girl passed by me wearing a garment dyed with a beautiful dye. I looked at her, neglected my business and was unable to put in the window as it ought to be done.« The judge said unto them: »Go, bring the girl who was wearing that beautiful garment!« They rose and went away and brought her to him. The judge said unto her: »Why didst thou wear the dyed garment?« She answered: »What does that concern me? That is the fault of the dyer who dyed the garment which I was wearing.« The judge gave order to bring the dyer. They went and brought him; but he could not answer anything. Said the judge to them: »Take him and hang him in front of his shop!« They took him in order to hang him, but they found that he was too tall and that the door of his shop was too low. They returned and

said to the judge: »That man is very tall, and the door of his shop is too low. How shall we hang him?« Then the judge said unto them: »Go and find a shorter man and hang him!« So they went and looked for a shorter man: that man was taken and hanged.«

142.

bakalmik yā bintī ta tisma'ī yā kintī.

I speak to thee, my daughter, so that thou mayest hear it, my daughter-in-law. — Syrian.

»There are quite a number of variant readings of this proverb: sometimes the daughter is addressed, as above, and the daughter-in-law is meant; sometimes the female neighbour is addressed and the daughter-in-law is meant, Or, again, a pillar is addressed, and the slave-girl is meant. These parallels are reported from Syria, by Shuqair, p. 17, No. 8, by Tallqvist No. 127, by Jewett, No. 3, by Huxley, No. 54, by Einsler, Nos. 82 and 83; furthermore from Mesopotamia by Socin 554, and from the Maghrib by Ben Cheneb, No. 1538 and 1544.«

143.

fi l-qalbe yigraḥ wela bên in-nâs yifḍaḥ.

Let it cut into the heart, but do not expose it before the world. — Universal.

»Shuqair, p. 23, No. 13, gives a proverb with the same meaning.«

144.

'inte 'bêd willa zbêd?

Art thou a slave or a free man? — Sudanese.

»The exact interpretation of this proverb is not certain.«

145.

'inte zôl willa zawâl?

Art thou a man or a shadow? — Sudanese.

146.

kûs-lak ghurâb wa-qiṣṣo.

Look for a raven and shear its wool. — Sudanese.

»About No. 145 and No. 146 the same is to be said as about No. 144. The word written *kûs* above was written by Mrs. Singer *kous*: in Sudanese Arabic the verb *kûs* (*u*) means 'to seek, to look for'.«

147.

ulâd in-nâs yi'rafûhum bishnû? bil-ghurba.

Where would the sons of good families be recognized? Amongst strangers. — Sudanese.

»But Shuqair says (p. 93, No. 7, from Egypt) that »Being amongst strangers makes the origin to be lost«. — The word *bishnû*, written by Mrs. Singer *be shenou* and translated by her »where«, should perhaps rather be translated »by what, how«.

148.

'illī 'and in-nâs ba'îd 'and allâh qarîb.

What is far with men is near with God. — Universal.

»Ben Cheneb has only the second half of this proverbs, i. e. »What is with God is near«, No. 2176, and »What is with God is not far«, No. 2177.«

149.

'illī bīdauwar fī ḥaqqo mā fîh yelûmo.

A man looking for his right is blamed by none. — Sudanese.

»Maḥmûd knew the same from Cairo, but used the words . . . *'ala ḥaqqu mā ḥaddish yelûmu.*«

150.

melikên fôq kakar da ghâb da ḥaḍar.

Two kings after one queen: one is absent, the other appears. — Sudanese.

»The meaning of this proverb is uncertain; the word *kakar* may be of Nubian origin.«

151.

'ênī fîha dakhalit li-wādîha.

My eye is for it (I envy it), it went into its valley (hiding place). — Sudanese.

»Perhaps a Syrian proverb may be compared with this one, viz.: »My eye is on it, but pshaw on it!« (Jewett, No. 106). This is interpreted: »I am between turning towards or liking this thing and turning away or disliking it. Used of one who is wavering in a matter, wanting it at one time and not wanting it at another.«

152.

shufti d-dḥēshât yiddaḥshashen, qumtī tiddaḥshashī.

Thou sawest the little donkeys play, so thou rosest to play like them. — Sudanese.

»The word *deḥêsh* stands, of course, for *geḥêsh*; and from it the verb *iddaḥshash* is derived. Similar proverbs are reported by Ben Cheneb from the Maghrib. No. 422 reads: »He passed a night in the swamp and woke up as a cousin of the frogs«; No. 2256: »He passed a night with the frogs and began to croak in the morning«; No. 2257: »He passed a night in the river and woke up as a cousin of the frogs«; No. 2258: »He passed a night with the chickens and began to cackle in the morning«.

153.

in-nasab ḥasab.

The marriage-ties demand consideration. — Sudanese.

»This proverb is not known to me from other sources; but the words *ḥasab* and *nasab* are sometimes used together in Arabic, as e. g. in my *Arabische Beduinenerzählungen*, I, p. 3, l. 6«.

154.

il-kerîm lā yu'âb.

The generous man will not be put to shame. — Sudanese.

»Shuqair, p. 101, No. 14 (from Egypt and Syria), reads: »Generosity covers all shame«; and Ben Cheneb,

No. 2769 (from the Maghrib): »The generous man is the friend of God«.

155.

in-nâs bin-nâs wil-kulle billâhi.

Every man for himself and God for all. — Universal.

»A literal translation of this proverb is: »Men [depend] upon men and all [depend] upon God«. The same version is known to Shuqair, p. 51, No. 5 (from Syria, Egypt and the Sudan), and to Berggren, p. 427, under *homme* (from Syria). Ben Chenob, No. 1871, gives from the Maghrib: »Men [are helped] by men, and [all] men [are helped] by God«, and he refers to some other parallels.«

156.

'i'mil ṭaiyib iwirmîh il-baḥr.

Do good and throw it in the sea. — Sudanese.

»This proverb may either refer to the ungratefulness of the human race, or it may advise to do good, but not to boast of it. It is known to all Arabic speaking people. Shuqair mentions it on p. 11, No. 73, from Syria, Egypt and the Sudan; Socin, No. 544, from Mesopotamia; Einsler, No. 38, from Jerusalem. Ben Chenob, No. 155 reads: »Do good and forget it«, and No. 753: »Do good and put it behind thee; to-morrow thou wilt find it before thee«. He interprets, therefore, that a good deed is never lost. Bauer and Berggren give a more complete version and indicate that every

good deed, even if forgotten with men, is known to God. Bauer, No. 41, reads: »Do good and throw it into the sea; if the fish do not see it, thy Lord will see it«; and Berggren col. 108, under *bien*, gives as the second half »if it is not seen with the fish, it is seen with God«.

157.

iṭ-ṭaiyibât lillâh.

The good is for God. — Sudanese.

»The meaning of this proverb is probably the same as that of another one quoted by Berggren, col. 108, under *bien*: »Do good, and the reward is with God«.

158.

il-ḥasana fillī mā yiswâha hìya gaza lillī sawâha.

Kindness to him that does not deserve it, is recompense to him that did it. — Sudanese.

»It should be noted that in Mrs. Singer's rendering the relative pronoun *illī* and the personal pronoun *hiya* were omitted; the form given above was advised by Maḥmûd.«

159.

il-maʿrûf gazâhu maʿrûf.

The recompense of a favour is another favour. — Sudanese.

»Bauer (No. 40) and Einsler (No. 38) give a parellel which says: »Do good and thou wilt find good«.

160.

il-ḥasana fi l-man'ûl zaiy ish-shara fi l-qandûl.

Charity to a cursed one is like prickles in a durahead. — Sudanese.

161.

ḥamdulla yā gämäl 'innu gā minnak wa-mā gash minnī.

Thank God, oh camel, that it came from thee and did not come from me.

»The origin of this proverb was not indicated by Mrs. Singer. It seems to be Egyptian. Maḥmûd quoted it from Cairo, with the variant *il-ḥamdu lillâh* for *ḥamdulla*, and said it was used when a man wants to say something, but does not utter it, and when then his interlocutor says it. A similar thought may be found in a proverb quoted by Spitta, No. 149, and Green, No. 127: »Blessing, upon thee, oh mosque, that it came from thee and did not come from me«. I. c. »I wanted to pray, but thy door was closed«.

162.

il-ma'rûf 'arba' kufûf.

Better four slaps than doing a favour. — Sudanese.

»The translation presented by Mrs. Singer seems to render the meaning correctly, but the Arabic original, as it stands, means literally: »A favour [is as much as] four slaps«.

163.

wala hû shâfi' wala hû nâfi'.

He does not intercede and is of no use. — Sudanese.

»Maḥmûd knew the proverb in this form from Cairo. Ben Cheneb, No. 286, has a more complete version: »Him that is of no use keep away; in this world he is no good and in the other he does not intercede«.

164.

wala ilḥaq il-käbda wala l-muṣrân.

[His food was so scarce that] it neither reached the liver nor the bowels. — Sudanese.

165.

ḍahrī sebîl we-rabbī wakîl.

I do good and my Lord is my representative. — Sudanese.

»The expression *ḍahrī sabîl* »my back is a public fountain« was interpreted by Maḥmûd to mean that »everybody profits by what I do«, i. e. »I am doing good all my life«. But, of course, »do good, and the reward is with God« (above, No. 159): therefore, God is the representative of the man who does good, he takes care of his »estate of good deeds«.

166.

'illī mā 'indo wad-umm baṭno yeṭumm. (?)

He that has no mother's son — his inside is unhappy. — Sudanese.

»The expression »mother's son« means »brother«; in Amharic it has become the common word for »brother«. The word *yeṭumm* was written in the original *îtoum*;

I therefore do not know whether the verb *tamma* or *ṭamma* is intended. But the latter seems more probable.«

167.

min khallânī gdêrak yâkul il-hamm fôq ghêrak.

He that made me as great as thee, will put the weight on others. — Sudanese.

»The word *gdêrak* is the deminutive of *gadr* or *qadr*, which in other dialects has been changed to *qadd*.«

168.

balîlit il-imbashshir wala ṭabîkhat il-imkashshir.

Better dura from a pleasant person than a sheep from a frowning one. — Sudanese.

»This proverb is given here in its Sudanese form; Maḥmûd read *mubashshar*, *mukashshar* and *tabikhit*. The word *balîla* means »boiled corn«, *ṭabîkha* »cooked meat«; Mrs. Singer used the more specified terms »dura« and »sheep« instead.«

169.

id-dinya badal, yômin ʿasal, yômin baṣal.

The world changes, one time it is honey, another time onions.

»This complaint of human frailty and of the fickleness of fate is deeply rooted in the heart of mankind everywhere. Some of its echoes in the Arabic tongue may be given here in translation.

»One day is honey, another day onions«, Shuqair, p. 58, No. 51 (from Syria, Egypt and the Sudan); Spitta, No. 154, and Green, No. 131 (from Egypt).

»The world is sweet and bitter«, Shuqair, p. 81, No. 26 (from Syria and Egypt); Einsler, No. 104 (from Jerusalem, with a verse which is not quite intelligible).

»Fate is with thee: one hour for thee, and another hour against thee«, Shuqair, p. 24, No. 28 (from Syria).

»One day is for thee and another day against thee«, Shuqair, p. 58, No. 53 (from Syria, Egypt and the Sudan); Ben Cheneb, No. 2065.

»If fate be just, it is one day for thee and another day against thee«, Shuqair, p. 68, No. 257 (from Egypt).

»The world is like a dancing girl: it dances to every one for a little while«, Shuqair, p. 81, No. 27 (from Egypt).

»In this world there is hardship and easiness«, Einsler, No. 104 (from Jerusalem).

»The world is a pregnant night, and it brings forth strange things; one day it is for thee and another day against thee«, Socin, No. 427 (from Mesopotamia).

»Time is a wheel, a day with you, a day against you«, Jewett, No. 51 (from Syria).

And Ben Cheneb, No. 3013, quotes a verse, which reads translated:

»I have observed the world and found it very vain:
It smiles to man for an hour, then turns its back again«.

And this is the principal thought of the author of the book of Ecclesiastes.«

Addenda.

P. 27, No. 51: read *is-sulṭân.*

P. 36, No. 75: read *mût.*

I wish to call attention once more to the fact that the proverbs published here have been taken from three different Arabic dialects. It was, therefore, unavoidable that a small number of proverbs were given, so to speak, in a »neutral« dialect. The large majority, however, is given in the modern Egyptian Arabic, as it is spoken in Cairo, even where Mrs. Singer indicated that the proverb was first heard in Syria. Generally, where a specifically Syrian or Sudanese form is used, I have mentioned it in my notes; with the exception of these few cases, all proverbs will be understood in Cairo at once, even those which are given in the »neutral« dialect. But he who whishes to use this collection for a philological study of modern Arabic dialects should be familiar with them to a certain degree and consult also the grammars and vocabularies of these dialects.

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امثال العوام

من

مصر والسودان والشام

جمعتها

السيدة بولين سينجر

اطبعها وشرحها

الاستاذ الدكتور أنو ليتمان معلم اللغات الشرقية فى
جامعة استراسبورج وقبلا فى الجامعة المصرية

طبع على نفقة مكتب ديمر فى مصر القاهرة المحروسة

سنة ١٩١٣ ميلادية

(١) روح حلو تعالى حلو ان حبيبك عسل لا تلحسه كله

(٢) الشهر اللى مافيه لك شهريه لا تعد أيامه

(٣) بحبك يا سواري زي زندي لأ

(٤) اللي بيا كل من سفرة السلطان بيضرب بسيفه

(٥) ان جاك نحس امسكه بايدك ورجلك لا يجيك أنحس وأنحس

(٦) العين ما تعلى عن الحاجب

(٧) القرد فى عين أمه غزاله

(٨) الحب والحبل وطلوع الجبل ما يتخبا

(٩) عين الشمس ما بتتخبا باليد

(١٠) دق على طاسه تجيك ألف لحّاسه

(١١) كبر البصل وتدوّر ونسي حاله الاول

(١٢) مش عليك يا بطنى عليك يا قدرى

(١٣) كلب خلف جرو طلع أنجس من أبوه

(١٤) الله ما شافوه عرفوه بالعقل

(١٥) الدوده جوّا الحجر تأكل خضار

(١٦) جرّ البنت من كمها بتطلع لأمها

(١٧) دود الجبن منه فيه

(١٨) اللي بيلاعب القطه يستنى على خراميشها

(١٩) اللى بيستعمل البخور بيحترق دياله

(٢٠) زرعت لَوْ في وادي كان طلع يا ريت

(٢١) يا داخل بين البصل والتوم يا طالع بريحه شاذه

(٢٢) عند سيدى عرس ألحس ايدي

(٢٣) ابن الاصيل ما بيتخبّا

(٢٤) الايد اللي ما بتقدر تعضها بوسها وحطها على راسك وادعي عليها بالكسر

(٢٥) القنبره ما بتكون غير على الحمير المدبره

(٢٦) كل مانه بيلبس من صندوقه

(٢٧) اللى فى الصندوق على ظهر المرزوق

(٢٨) بوس الايدين ضحك عاللحي

(٢٩) كل مانه يسحب النار لقرصه

(٣٠) خد الاصيل لو عا لحصير

(٣١) الاصيل ما بيعيبه جلاله

(٣٢) بيت السبع ما يخلى عظام

(٣٣) القليله ولا القلّه

(٣٤) الكحل ولا العمي

(٣٥) الاعمى عايز ايه ؟ قفة عيون ؛ لا واحد يكفى

(٣٦) البيضه ما تدقش الحجر

(٣٧) إدّى عيشك للفرّان لَونّه يسرق نصّه

(٣٨) الحلّه لقت غطايتها

(٣٩) مابتمسك بطيختين في يد

(٤٠) دنبة الكاب ما تتعادل ان حطيته في مية قالب

(٤١) الأخ أخ مراته والمجنونه حلفت بحياته

(٤٢) مابتعرف خيرى تاتجرّب غيري

(٤٣) اللى بيا كل على ضرسه بينفع نفسه

(٤٤) اللي بيفقدنى بعظمه أنا عنده عظيم

(٤٥) اللى في البدن مابيغيّره الا الكفن

(٤٦) كل ديك على مزبلته صيّاح

(٤٧) ايد على ايد يرمى بعيد

(٤٨) الجمل ان شاف حردبته يقع ويكسر رقبته

(٤٩) كل مانه يرجع لأصله

(٥٠) موت مع الناس رحمه

(٥١) اللى عنده فلوسه بنت السلطان عروسه

(٥٢) العب وحدك تجي راضى

(٥٣) كل مانه على دينه الله يعينه

(٥٤) راح المسكين يفرح ما لقى مطرح

(٥٥) عزمنا الأقرع كشف راسه وخوّفنا

(٥٦) اللى بيكيل البحر بطاقيته

(٥٧) فرو العيره مابيدفّي وان دفّي ما دام

(٥٨) طول عمرك يا زبيبه فى راسك العوده

(٥٩) ياللى زيّنا تعالوا إلينا

(٦٠) شاور كبيرك وصغيرك وارجع لعقلك

(٦١) مال الوقف بيهدّ السقف

(٦٢) ما بتقدر تسقف بايد وحده

(٦٣) جوزي بيحبنى وأنا قويّه وأخوى وأنا غنيه

(٦٤) الكامه الحلوه تطلّع الدبيبه من خزقها

(٦٥) ان اعطيت أصبع ياخدوا إيد .

(٦٦) فى الوشّ مرايه وفي القفا مدرايه

(٦٧) إيد بتغسّل إيد

(٦٨) قبل ما تسأل عالدار اسأل عالجار

(٦٩) ان شفتني بضحك معاك وان ما شفتنى راحت عليك

(٧٠) زيوان بلدك ولا قمح الغريب

(٧١) اللى بيشوفنى بالعين بشوفه بالعينتين

(٧٢) أمرق جوعان عن عدوّك ولا تمرق عريان

(٧٣) القوقن يصيح والبحر مستريح

(٧٤) اللى تحت إبطه مسلّه تنخسه

(٧٥) موت تأحبّك

(٧٦) قاضى الأولاد شنق حاله

(٧٧) كل حاجه عند العطّار فيه إلاّ حبّني بالغصب ما فيه

(٧٨) ما فيه كبير الاّ الجمل

(٧٩) محبة الغول لابنه

(٨٠) قلبي على ولدى وقلب ولدى على الحجر

(٨١) اصبع بخت ولا خزنه مال

(٨٢) مال الحرام للحرام يسحب

(٨٣) من قلة الخيل شدوا على الكلاب السروج

(٨٤) اللى يشرب من البير ما يرمي فيه حجر

(٨٥) الدبّانه الصغيره بتغالط المنافس

(٨٦) ما هو كل صف صوانى بيقول عن حاله حلواني

(٨٧) لاتقول للمغنّي غنّي ولا للرقّاص ارقص

(٨٨) لاتورّى المشنوق حبل ولا المحروق نار

(٨٩) يا حافر الجرّه يا واقع فيها

(٩٠) ان شفت أعمى اضربه ماانت أحسن من ربه

(٩١) ما تخاف غير من الماء الهادىه

(٩٢) الديك الفصيح من البيضه بيصيح

(٩٣) ما يحن عالعود غير قشره

(٩٤) ما يحك ظهرك غير ظفرك

(٩٥) كل مانه يعرف مرارة تمه

(٩٦) ما فيه يقول عن عسله حامض

(٩٧) اللي دبر ما جاع واللي رقع ما يعرى

(٩٨) الماء في البير بدها تدبير

(٩٩) المعروف عند الحرّ دين وعند الندل عداوه

(١٠٠) كل خروف يتعلق من عرقوبه

(١٠١) الحيطه الواطيه الكل ينطّها

(١٠٢) دق على الباب تسمع جواب

(١٠٣) اللي ما هو كاره يا ناره

(١٠٤) ان أكلت اشبع وان ضربت أوجع

(١٠٥) مكسور لا تاكل صحيح لا تكسر وكل تا تشبع

(١٠٦) البيت اللى ربّاني ما هرب وخلاّنى

(١٠٧) مد رجلك على قدّ فراشك

(١٠٨) البيت عالى والصيت خالى

(١٠٩) يا مستعجل استنّي لمّا اكلّمك

(١١٠) ياللي مصارينه طالع إدّيني لقطى

(١١١) انا حامل لحبتى وأنت تعبان فيها ؟

(١١٢) عايز تاكل بلح وبتخاف من الشوك ؟

(١١٣) البيت بيت ابونا والكلاب طاحونا

(١١٤) البيت بيتنا والقمر جارنا

(١١٥) بوس الكلب في تمّه تا تاخد غرضك منّه

(١١٦) اللى بيشارك القوم أربعين يوم بيصير منهم
يا بيرحل عنهم

(١١٧) افتكرنا الباشا باشا أتاريه راجل

(١١٨) النقر يكسر الحجر

(١١٩) العيد يوم والرعنا قتلت حالها

(١٢٠) بعد أمّي وأبوى الكل غريب

(١٢١) يا قوم الك يوم

(١٢٢) اللى معه ما بيمنعه لبس الحرير ما بيقلعه

(١٢٣) الحيّ ولا الموت

(١٢٤) صمّد نفسك يصمّدوك الناس عفر نفسك يفروك الفراخ

(١٢٥) ان كانوا الف أعزّ من عينيّ

(١٢٦) القمح بيدور وبيرجع للطاحونه

(١٢٧) طيابة الشطور لمّا للقبور

(١٢٨) الى بيحرّك السمّ بيدوقه

(١٢٩) الاصيل بيا كل فول وبيرجع للأصول

(١٣٠) في الحبس ياما فيه مظاليم

(١٣١) غبنة العربيه برّدناها في السريه

(١٣٢) اللى بيموتوه بيدوقوه واللي بيعملوه بيلاقوه

(١٣٣) يا أم العموم حفرة القبور

(١٣٤) يا ساعي فين الراعي

(١٣٥) كونوا اخوان وتحاسبوا

(١٣٦) ضرب الحبيب زبيب وحجارته تين

(١٣٧) ما هو كلّه غزل

(١٣٨) اطبخي يا جاريه كلّف يا سيدى

(١٣٩) ستّى مكّاره وأنا أمكر منها

(١٤٠) ما بتعرف الانسان غير لما تجرّبه

(١٤١) أذنب الخضارجى شنقوا العطّار

(١٤٢) بكلّمك يا بنتى تا تسمعى يا كنّتى

(١٤٣) في القلب يجرح ولا بين الناس يفضح

(١٤٤) انت عبيد ولاّ زبيد

(١٤٥) انت زول ولاّ زوال

(١٤٦) كوس لك غراب وقصّه

(١٤٧) ولاد الناس يعرفوهم بشنو ! بالغربه

(١٤٨) اللي عند الناس بعيد عند الله قريت

(١٤٩) اللي بيدوّر في حقه ما فى يلومه

(١٥٠) ملكين فوق ككر دا غاب ودا حضر

(١٥١) عينى فيها دخلت لواديها

(١٥٢) شفتِ الدحيشات يتدحششن قمتِ تتدحششى.

(١٥٣) النسب حسب

(١٥٤) الكريم لا يعاب

(١٥٥) الناس بالناس والكل بالله

(١٥٦) اعمل طيب وارميه البحر

(١٥٧) الطيبات لله

(١٥٨) الحسنه فى اللي ما يسواها هى جزا للى سواها

(١٥٩) المعروف جزاه معروف

(١٦٠) الحسنه فى المنعول زيّ الشرا في القندول

(١٦١) الحمد لله يا جمل انّه جا منك وما جاش منى

(١٦٢) المعروف أربع كفوف

(١٦٣) ولا هو شافع ولا هو نافع

(١٦٤) ولا ألحق الكبده ولا المصران

(١٦٥) ظهرى سبيل وربى وكيل

(١٦٦) اللي ما عنده واد أمّ بطنه يطمّ (؟)

(١٦٧) من خلاّنى قديرك يا كل الهم فوق غيرك

(١٦٨) بليلة المبشر ولا طبيخة المكشر

(١٦٩) الدنيا بدل يومٍ عسلٍ يومٍ بصل

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